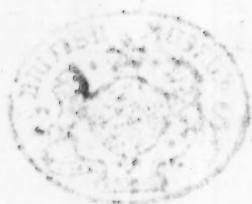


THE
H E A R E R'S
REMEMBRANCER;
Containing a VIEW,
OF THE
LEADING IDEAS,
OF A
Number of SERMONS,
PREACHED AT
NEW CHAPEL, *Dagger-Lane,*
HULL;

By S. BARNARD, Minister of the Gospel.

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M,DCC,XCV.



To the Congregation at New Chapel,
DAGGER-LANE, HULL.

Men and Brethren,

BY your particular request it is, that I undertake to give you a short sketch of some of those SERMONS, which have been found most useful and instructive to you, since God in his providence cast my lot among you. This work will serve to remind you of those truths, which are too apt to be forgotten, even by the most attentive hearers of God's word.—On which account it is, I have called it the HEARER'S REMEMBRANCER.—Your particular attachment to the truths of the everlasting Gospel, encourages me to undertake a work, which requires so much time and attention as this will; however in this respect I can say with the Apostle, that to write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous; but for you it is safe; Phil. iii. 1,—and that you may find it so;

Prays your willing Servant,
for Jesus's sake,
S. BARNARD.

T H E
HEARER'S REMEMBRANCER.

S E R M O N I.

Mark xvi. 15.

—Preach the Gospel to every Creature.

THIS Chapter furnishes us with an account of Christ's resurrection, of his appearing to Mary Magdalene and two other disciples, as they were going into the country; after which he appeared also to the eleven Apostles as they sat at meat, and having reproved them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, he said unto them, go ye into all the world and—*preach the gospel to every creature*, in which words three ideas are evidently contained, that is to say,

- I. The Act,
- II. The Matter, and
- III. The Universality of Preaching.

First, as to the *Act* of preaching, it does not consist of *offering* either Christ or the blessings which flow from him, these being not at the preacher's disposal, but at the disposal of God himself; nor is the term *offer* found any where in all the bible, as a substitute for the term *preach*.—And as the term itself is not to be found in the bible, so neither is what is implied thereby, since the term *offer* seems to indicate to our hearers, as though we possessed

and had the disposal of the blessings : But preaching represents them to be in, and at the disposal of Christ himself.

2. Nor does preaching consist only in *quoting* scripture, but in *opening* it, or shewing its meaning ; this was Paul's manner we are informed, to reason with the people out of the scriptures, opening and alledging (or declaring) that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead. Acts xvii. 3.

3. But preaching is represented to us, under the idea of a *report* in Isaiah liii. 1. where the prophet asks, who hath believed our report ? &c.

4. Preaching is moreover set forth to us, under the idea of a *proclamation*, hence Christ is said in Isaiah lxi. 1. to be sent to *proclaim* liberty to the captives, &c.

5. We find also that ministers are called *teachers*, and that by Christ himself, who says, in Matthew xxviii. 19. go ye therefore and *teach* all nations ; that is to say, their lost, guilty, and helpless state by nature, and that there is salvation in me for the vilest of the vile, but in no other.

6. The work of preaching is compared to that of a *crier*, hence the preaching of John the Baptist is said to be the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Matt. iii. 3. Now the work of a town crier, is not to *offer* the commodities to the inhabitants, but to report or inform them, that they are to be had at such and such a place.

7. Preaching is emblematically set forth, by *Moses lifting up the Serpent*. John iii. 14. For as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, which not only points out to us, his being lifted up upon the cross, for the salvation of his people ; but his being lifted up also by his *ministers*, in a preached gospel.

II. We

II. We proceed now to the *Matter* of preaching, which is the GOSPEL, that is good news or glad tidings, as expressed by the Angel, in Luke ii. 10. Now this gospel proclaims,

1. *Righteousness*, for those who feel their own unrighteousness. Accordingly we are informed in Rom. x. 4. that Christ is (or went to) the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, which righteousness God puts to the account of all his people; therefore it is said, blessed is the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, (Rom. iv. 6.) that is, without works as the cause thereof.

2. This gospel proclaims *pardon* to those who feel themselves guilty. For Christ having *took* our sins, he bore the punishment of them in his own body on the tree. 1 Pet. ii. 24. We are informed also, that he gave his life a ransom for many; Matt. xx. 28. and that he hath put away sin (before God) by the sacrifice of himself; Heb. ix. 26. therefore it is said of God, that he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. 1 John i. 9. And here we may see, that it becomes an act of *justice* of a faithful God, to forgive freely and fully all the sins of all those for whom Christ died, having received full satisfaction at his hands on their account.

3. This gospel also proclaims *peace* to the distressed. Hence we are informed by the Apostle, that Christ hath made peace (on God's part) by the blood of his cross; Col. i. 20. by which an honourable peace is for ever made. And as Christ hath thus made peace, so also he bestows peace, for when addressing his disciples, he said, my peace I give unto you, (John xiv. 27.) therefore said he, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Thus we find that Christ is both the *author* and *giver* of peace to his people who are in distress. — And in short,

4. The

4. This gospel proclaims *eternal life* to all God's people; and also, that grace which makes meet for it; therefore we are informed by the Psalmist, that the Lord gives grace and glory. Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

III. We come now to the *universality* of preaching, which we are informed is to *every creature*, that is, to every individual who attends our ministry, in whose presence we are to preach—

1. The *necessity* of the gospel, by endeavouring to point out to them, their lost and helpless state and condition by nature;

2. The *nature* of it as above described; and

3. The *effects* of it, when the blessings thereof are received into the heart.

Hence we may observe, that it is the *minister's* work to preach the gospel, but it is *God's* work to make it effectual, to the salvation of his people.

SERMON II.

Phillip. i. vi.

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

WE may learn from the preceding verses to this of my text, that Paul dedicates this epistle to the *Saints* at Philippi.—That he expresses his regard for them by wishing them (an increase of) both grace and peace—that he is thankful to God on their behalf—and that he remembered them in every prayer of his, making request with joy.—To which he was encouraged

encouraged by the confidence which he had of this *very thing*, that he which had begun a good work in them would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.—In which words let us attend, to

- I. The Work itself;
- II. Its Property; and
- III. The Ground of Paul's Confidence.

First, By the work mentioned in my text, we are not to understand the *work of Christ*, for although the christian cannot do without that work, yet that cannot be the work alluded to in the words of this text; seeing the Apostle tells us, that it is a work begun in these Philippians,—But

2. By the work mentioned in my text, the *work of the Spirit* is intended, which is begun in the heart, the moment the sinner who was dead in trespasses and in sins, becomes quickened. Eph. ii. 1.

3. This work is called by the Apostle a *new Creation*; for says he, we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, (Eph. ii. 10.) without which *creation work*, we have neither *will*, nor *power* to perform good works; therefore we are informed, that it is God who worketh in us, both to *will*, and to *do*, of his own good pleasure. Phil. ii. 13.

4. In this work the sinner is brought—to see his state—to feel his guilt—to confess his sins—to turn from them—to cry to God for mercy—to believe in Jesus to the salvation of his soul, and to love God and live to his glory.—But let us proceed,

II. To its Property.

It is called in our text, a *good work*, which it may with propriety be,

I, Because

1. Because it is begun by a *good God*. Hence we are informed by David, that good and upright is the Lord. Psal. xxv. 8. Now, God is not only *essentially* good; but he is good also *communicatively*, to all his dear children.

2. This work may be called a good work also; on account of its being wrought for a *good purpose*, namely, to *sanctify* their souls and make them meet for *communion* with God here, and for the *enjoyment* of God hereafter. Hence we find that Paul tells the Colossians, they were made meet to be partakers, of the inheritance of the Saints in light. Col. i. 12. mark, they did not make themselves meet, but were made so by God.—Therefore,

3. It may be called a good work likewise, on account of the *good end* which God hath in view in performing it; which is to *glorify* his people for ever.

Therefore the Apostle tells us, whom he calls, (or sanctifies in calling) them he also glorifies: Rom. viii. 30. but without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. Heb. xii. 14.—We are come now to consider,

III. The Ground of Paul's confidence—which he might build on—

1. The *perfection of God's works*, for he is the rock, and his *work is perfect*, (Deut. xxxii. 4.) whether we conceive of his work of *creation—providence—redemption*, or of his work of *grace* in the hearts of his people. Accordingly the wise man has expressed himself thus; I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it. Eccl. iii. 14.

2. The *atonement of Christ* also, was a ground for Paul's confidence, for Christ himself tells us, he laid down his *life* for his *sheep*, John x. 15. and as he laid down

down his life for them ; it is utterly impossible that they should ever perish.

3. Their *union to Christ* is another thing ; on which Paul might ground his confidence in this matter, for He is the *head* and his people the *members* of his mystical Body—He is the *vine* and they are the *branches*, and Christ tells his disciples, because I live, you shall live also. John xiv. 19.

4. The *earnest of the Spirit* is another thing, which might assist the Apostle in his confidence in this matter ; for when he was writing to the Corinthians, he says, God hath given unto us the *earnest* of the spirit, (2 Cor. i. 22.) which *earnest* shall never be withdrawn again, for Christ told his disciples, that he (the comforter) should abide with them for ever ; (John xiv. 16.) and if so, the work which he hath begun, must be carried on and finished, as the text declares.

5. The *nature of the life* which Christ gives to his *sheep* is another thing, which supported the Apostle's confidence ; for says Christ, I give unto them *eternal* life, (John x. 28.) and therefore it is, that they shall never perish, and if so, they must be for ever saved. But—

6. The *intercession of Christ* for his people also, supported the Apostle's confidence in this very thing ; for we are informed, that he ever liveth to make intercession for them ; (Heb. vii. 29.) and Christ addressing his father, in John xi. 42. says ; I knew that thou hearest me always ; and if so, he must be heard in that request which he makes in John xvii. 24. where he says, father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.—Now from these considerations, the Apostle might well say, he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ ; which passage establishes in the strongest manner the doctrine of the
final

final perseverance of the *Saints*, seeing the same God who *begins*, *carries on*, and *finishes* the work of grace in the hearts of all his people; by which he makes them meet *for*, and then takes them *to* that kingdom, which is allotted for them. And all such characters, who experience this good work wrought within them, will be addressed at the last with, come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom *prepared for you*, from the foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 34. From the whole we may learn *first*, that a kingdom is prepared for all God's people. *Secondly*, that these people are prepared for that kingdom, and then *thirdly*, they are called hence to take possession of; and inherit it, for ever and ever.

S E R M O N III.

Rom. vi. 22.

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

THIS chapter presents to us the effects of God's grace in the hearts of his regenerate people. The Apostle informed such, that sin should not have dominion over them; and though they were formally the servants of sin, they had then obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine delivered to them, and were become ashamed of those things, in which they formerly took pleasure; therefore said he, now being made free from sin, and become servants to God; ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.—Let us consider,

I. What

- I. What this Freedom from Sin is,
- II. Take notice of its Effects, and
- III. Of the *End* of those who enjoy it.

First, By this Freedom from Sin, we are not to understand, that these Romans were freed from the *being* of sin, any more than from the *acts* of sin; because an idea of this nature militates against both scripture and christian experience. The wise man informs us in Eccl. vii. 20. there is not a *just* man upon earth, that *doth good*, (that is) continually and uninterruptedly, and that *sinneth not*, either in thought, word or deed. Therefore Christ taught his own disciples, when they prayed, to say, *forgive us our debts*, (Matt. vi. 12.) which is a needless petition, if any of his disciples could live without contracting any. Besides we find this Apostle, toward the close of the following chapter, groaning under a corrupt nature; saying, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom. vii. 24.—But

2. The freedom spoken of in my text, is a freedom from the *charge of sin*; therefore says this Apostle, blessed is the man, to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Rom. iv. 8. And this is the blessed privilege of all his *beloved and chosen ones*, for the father caused to meet upon Christ the iniquity of them all. Isai. liii. 6.

3. The freedom of which we are now speaking, is a freedom likewise from the *punishment of sin*, for where no sin is charged, no punishment can be inflicted.—Accordingly we are informed, (1 Pet. ii. 24.) that Christ his own self, bare *our sins*; (that is, both the *charge* and the *punishment* due to them) in his own body on the tree: and these he bore, as a surety for all his people.

B

4. It

4. It is a freedom also from the *love of sin* in the heart ; for they that fear the Lord, as do all his regenerated ones, are said to *hate evil*, Prov. viii. 13. which hatred is manifested by departing from it. Prov. xvi. 6.—Therefore,

5. It is a freedom likewise, from the *dominion of sin*, in the life and conversation ; accordingly we are told by this Apostle, that sin shall not have *dominion over you*, (Rom. vi. 14) that is, *you* that are called, or regenerated by God's spirit.—We are now come to take notice,

II. Of the Effects of this deliverance ; they become, (we are told) servants to God.

1. These like good servants enquired after the *mind and will* of their heavenly Master, and that too no doubt, with an intention to do it ; to the honor and praise of his great name. Acts, ix. 6.—And

2. These like good servants undoubtedly waited upon their master, agreeable to what the psalmist says ; my soul wait thou only upon God : for my expectation is from him. Psal. lxii. 5.—Again

3. They like good servants did all they could to *promote the cause and interest* of their heavenly Master, and to spread his fame abroad ; (John iv. 29.) all of which they like good servants did

4. *Faithfully*, and from a *principle of love* in their hearts to their master, which principle stimulates the christian, to act faithfully and to the glory of God ; for says the Apostle, the *love of Christ* constraineth us (2 Cor. v. 14.) that is to say, to search his word, to wait upon him, to promote his cause and interest, and thus to glorify his holy name.—But, we are informed also, that being freed from sin as above described, they had their fruit unto *holiness*; from whence we may see, that a real christian is a fruitful person.

Now

Now this fruit, (which we are told is unto holiness) is the *effect* of union to Christ; who tells us, I am like a green fir tree; from me is thy fruit found. Hosea xiv. 8.—But before a man can bring forth *holy* or *good* fruit, he must possess

1. The *holy spirit*, which is the privilege of all God's called and regenerated people; hence Christ told his disciples, he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. John xiv. 17. But this holy spirit produces in the hearts of all his people—

2. A *holy principle* of action, which the Apostle Peter calls the *divine nature*; (2 Peter i. 4.) from whence flows,

3. *Holy fruit*, for the tree being made good, (by the grace of God) the fruit will be good also; and where holiness of heart is, it will manifest itself in holiness of life and conversation.—But let us proceed,

III. To take notice of the *End* of such; the text tells us, it is *everlasting life*, that is, such as are made free from sin, become servants to God, and have their fruit unto holiness; their *end* will be *everlasting life*, or the enjoyment of God for ever. This appears to be a truth,

1. From the *nature* of the *thing* itself, for as an unsanctified person, for want of a capacity cannot enjoy God; and therefore must be miserable: so likewise, a sanctified person, who has a capacity given him to know, love, and enjoy God, must be happy. And as it appears to be a truth founded on the nature of the *thing itself*, so also it does

2. From the absolute promise of Christ himself, who tells us; where I am, there also shall my servants be, (John xii. 26.) therefore, such will be addressed at the last with; come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation

foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 34. A kingdom being prepared for you, and you prepared for that kingdom; come now, and inherit it for ever and ever. Thus we find their *End* will be *everlasting life*, which is an end of all misery, and the everlasting enjoyment of all happiness.

From the whole then we may learn, that serving God by a holy life and conversation, does not *procure* a deliverance or freedom from sin; but being made free from sin first, we then become servants to God, have our fruit unto holiness, and the end is sure to be everlasting life: according to the express declaration of the Apostle, in the words of my text.

SERMON IV.

Psalms cxvi. 7.

Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

IN the preceding part of this psalm, David expresses his love to God for hearing the voice of his supplication; and for the various deliverances he had wrought out for him; a sense of which deliverances constrained him to say in the language of my text;—*Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*—In discoursing on which words, I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. That God's People have a *Rest*;
- II. Point out the Times in which they are apt to depart from it;—And,
- III. Take notice of the Encouragement contained in the Text, for such to return.

First,

First, That God's People have a *Rest*, appears from what the Apostle says, in Heb. iv. 3. which every believer in Christ enters into the enjoyment of. This rest is *Christ*, and what relates to him, as

1. His *person*, as God-Man, Mediator, by whom whosoever comes to God, may rest assured that they shall find mercy, for we are told, HE is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him. Heb. vii. 25.—But

2. His *righteousness* is that upon which God's people, in all ages of the world have rested for acceptance with the father; therefore says the Apostle, HE (the father) hath made us accepted in the beloved; Eph. i. 6. and our *persons* being thus accepted, our *performances* are accepted in the same way. And mark here Brethren, our *performances* do not recommend our *persons* to God; but on the contrary, our *persons* are first accepted in Christ, and then our services become accepted in consequence thereof; therefore we are told, that unto *Abel* and his *offering* God had respect; (first to *Abel* observe, and then to his *offering*) but unto *Cain* and his *offering*, God had not respect; that is, he had no respect for the *person* of Cain, and therefore he had none for his *offering*. Gen. iv. 4, 5.

3. Another branch of the christian's *rest*, is the *death of Christ*, on which he may safely rely for a *free pardon* of all his transgressions: since we are told, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; 1 John i. 7. that is, from all that sin which the father laid upon him.—But

4. Another branch of the christian's *rest*, is the *gracefulness of Christ*, on which he may rely with safety for his *perseverance* in grace; for John tells us, of his *fulness* have all we received, and grace for grace. John i. 16.—Besides our *life of grace* (as well

as of *glory*) is hid with Christ in God, (Col. iii. 3.) therefore because Christ lives, we shall live also; (John xiv. 19) we shall live a life of *grace* here, and a life of *glory* hereafter.—But

5. Another part of the christian's *rest* is the *absolute promise* of an *unchangeable* God, who hath said for the encouragement of his disconsolate disciples; I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also, (John xiv. 3.) therefore, says David, thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Psal. lxxiii. 24.—Thus much for the christian's *rest*—proceed we,

II. To point out the Times in which they are apt to depart from it, and these are

1. When *Satan tempts*, which he does all God's regenerated people, for says the Apostle, there hath no temptation taken you, but such as is *common* to men, (1 Cor. x. 13.) that is to men called by grace as these Corinthians were. And the Prophet speaks of the enemy coming in like a flood, (Isai. lix. 10.) insomuch that the Apostle might well say, we are not ignorant of his devices; 2 Cor. ii. 11. neither of their *existence*, nor of his *intention* thereby, which is to draw the christian from his *rest* *Christ*.—But another season in which the christian is likely to depart from his *rest*, is

2. When *corruptions rise*, for though the christian partakes of a *divine nature*, he is nevertheless the subject of a *corrupt nature*, of which he is daily more and more made sensible, and is constrained to say with the Apostle; the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these (being) contrary the one to the other, (he) cannot do the things that he would, (Gal. v. 17.) but is frequently diverted by the risings of this corrupt nature, from his
rest

rest *Christ*.—Again, another season in which the christian is apt to depart from his rest is,

3. When *darkness besets his mind*, which is no uncommon case with God's children themselves; as appears by the Prophet's language where it is said; who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that *walketh in darkness and hath no light*? *Isai. l. x.* From which passage it evidently appears, that even those who *fear the Lord and obey him*, may be in darkness, not only as to God's *providential* dealings with them, but sometimes even as to their *acceptance* with God, in which season also, they are liable to be drawn from a reliance on their rest *Christ*.—And least this should be the case with any of my readers, let us

III. Take notice of the *Encouragement* contained in my text, for such to return; it is couched in these words; the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee, as appears by the eight verse of this Psalm.

1. From delivering his *soul from death*, by communicating to it spiritual life, to enable the psalmist to love God, and to live to his glory. He had delivered David's soul also from that *eternal death*, which he deserved on account of his sinning against him; not only in *Adam*, but also in his *own person*. But the bounty of God appeared towards him also,

2. In delivering his *eyes from tears*, with which he sometimes watered his couch in the night, (*Psal. vi. 6.*) and that from various causes. But God delivered him from them, either by removing the afflictions, which caused them, or supporting his mind under those afflictions.—Again the bounty of God appeared to him moreover,

3. In *delivering his feet from falling*, through the various assaults of his enemies. God's people are
liable

liable to fall, both into sin and into distress for it, and none but himself can preserve them; for the Lord we are told keepeth the feet of his saints, (1 Sam. ii. 9.) therefore David was wont to pray, hold thou me up, and I shall be safe. Psal. cxix. 117 — From a consideration of these things, David encourages his fainting soul saying, return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

S E R M O N V.

Eph. i. 4.

He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.

WE find this epistle is dedicated to the Saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful brethren in Jesus Christ.—And after the Apostle according to his usual manner, had wished them an increase of grace and peace; he praised God for the expression of his love to them, in blessing them with all spiritual blessings in Christ; according (said he) as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world; that we should be holy and without blame before him, in love. These words contain two things for our consideration; which are,

- I. The Choice itself—And
- II. The Ends which God had in view therein.

In the Choice itself we may observe,

1. The *author* of it, and this the text tells us

is HE, which word HE, alludes to the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, mentioned in the verse that precedes the text ; he is the author of this *free and sovereign* act, which is exercised towards all those who become in time the subjects of his grace.—But we may observe also,

2. The *objects* of this choice, which are not Angels, but sinful, helpless *Men* ; for says the Apostle, he hath chosen us in Christ—us who were entirely unworthy of such a favour, being by nature children, who were deserving of the wrath of God, even as others.—And mark Brethren, it is not an act which is *to be passed* ; but it is an act which *is passed* already, for the text says, he *hath* chosen us in Christ. Should any ask—

3. When this choice was made, the Apostle tells them *before* the *foundation* of the *world*, from which words we may learn, that *election* is no *time act*, but an *eternal one*, therefore says this same Apostle when writing to the Thessalonians, God hath from the *beginning* chosen you to salvation, (2 Thes. ii. 13.) not from the beginning of their *second* birth, nor from the beginning of their *first*, but from the beginning of the world, nay, before the foundation of the world, as my text assures us.—But let us proceed, to take notice of

II. The *Ends* which God had in view ; the text tells us,

1. *That we might be holy.* Mark Brethren, God did not first make us holy and then put us into Christ, but he chose us in him that we might be holy. We may observe here, the absolute *necessity* of this choice, for without it, no man could be holy, neither in heart, nor yet in life, and as without holiness no man shall see the Lord ; (Heb. xii. 14.) consequently, without
this

this *eternal choice* mentioned in my text, no man could possibly be glorified. And were I as a minister to deny this doctrine of *eternal election*, I should have no salvation to preach to any man upon the earth; for as there can be no *glory* without *grace*, so there can be no *grace* received without being *chosen* in Christ the living vine; therefore my text tells us, that God hath chosen us that we *might be holy*, that is, that we might have a *holy principle* communicated to us—to make us *holy in heart*—that we might be *holy in life* and all manner of *conversation*.—But,

2. Another *End* that God had in view, in this *eternal choice* was, that we might be *without blame* before him. In order to which, we must be free from the *charge* of sin, for whoever has sin charged to him, cannot be *without blame before God*; whatever he may be before men. Therefore we are told, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; (2 Cor. v. 19.) for the Father hath laid on Christ, the iniquities of all his own beloved and chosen ones, (Isai. liii. 6.) therefore, as no sin is imputed to them, they are without blame before God. But then this blessing also, as well as the former, is the result of *God's eternal choice*, and if God chose us in Christ, that we *might be without blame* before him; we could not have been without blame, had not that choice been made, and if not without *blame*, then not without *condemnation*, and where condemnation is, there *punishment* must be inflicted. But as there is no *condemnation* to them who are *in Christ*, consequently no *punishment* can be inflicted on them; Christ having borne that in his own body on the tree. Besides, being chosen in Christ, his *righteousness* becomes ours, for says the Prophet, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. Isai. xlv. 24.—But we are told

3. That

3. That all this is in (or through) *love*, not through the christian's love to God, but in, or through God's love to the christian; which is the source of these blessings mentioned in my text, and of every other, which he will enjoy in time, and through the countless ages of eternity.—From the whole then we may learn, that God's eternal choice of his people in Christ, secures to them *grace* in this world, and *glory* in that which is to come: but without this *choice*, neither the one, nor the other, could have been enjoyed by them; for as we received our *hurt* by sin, in consequence of being in Adam when he sinned; so also we receive our *benefit* from Christ, in consequence of our being in him, when he as our *surety* lived to fulfil the law, and died to suffer its penalty for us. But if we conceive of a man who was *out of Christ*, when he *lived* and *died*; we conceive of a man, who reaps no benefit from him, neither any *righteousness* from his life, nor *pardon* by his death, nor can he ever be sanctified from his fulness; for where there is no *union* to Christ, there can be no *communication* from him. Therefore it was, that God chose us in Christ, that we might be holy, as well as without blame before him.

S E R M O N VI.

John vi. 45.

—*And they shall be all taught of God.*—

THIS chapter informs us, of Christ's feeding *five thousand* people, with *five* loaves and *two* fishes—of his reproving the fleshly hearers of the word—after which he speaks of himself as the bread of life, which came

came down from heaven—at which some of the Jews murmured—on which account, he checked them—and after telling them, that no man can come to him, (in a saving way) except the father draw him;—he then introduced the words of the text saying, it is written in the prophets,—and they shall be all taught of God. In meditating on which words; let us enquire

I. Who *They* are,

II. *What* they shall be taught.

With regard to the persons, to whom the promise is made, we may observe,

First, They must be *living ones*, or they are not proper subjects to be taught any thing. They become so by being quickened *together with Christ*; (Eph. ii. 5.) that is in consequence of *union* to him; without which, no *spiritual* life could be enjoyed, any more than eternal life.—But again, the persons alluded to by the word *they* in my text, are

2. Described in Isaiah liv. 13. where the Prophet addresses the *Church* under the idea of a fruitful woman, saying, all thy *children* shall be taught of the Lord; for which purpose, we are told, the Lord dwelleth in Zion; Joel iii. 21. therefore it is said of the Holy Ghost, he shall *teach* you all things, (John xiv. 26.) that is, all things necessary for your present and everlasting happiness.—Again

3. The people alluded to by the word *they* in my text, are moreover said to be *all that the father gives Christ*, (verse 37th of this chapter,) and in the 39th verse, they are mentioned again by Christ, as all which he *hath given me*.—Now be it remembered Brethren, that all Christ's sheep were given to him in the covenant of grace, not only to *redeem*, but to *preserve*

preserve also, and to teach them by his spirit. — And they are given to Christ also, in effectual calling, in which act they are chosen out of the world; this I presume is the meaning of our Lord's words, in John xvii. 6. where he says; I have manifested thy name unto the men, which thou givest me out of the world: (or from among the men of it) thine they were, and thou gavest them me; which words, though they allude primarily to the Apostles, are nevertheless applicable to all whom he calls by his grace. In short, the word *they* in my text, alludes to all those who are *beloved* of the Father, *redeemed* by the Son, and *quickened* by the spirit of God. — This leads us to enquire into,

II. *What* they shall be taught. — And here let it be observed,

First, They shall be taught *to know themselves*, which is a lesson of the utmost importance to all the disciples of Jesus. — They shall be taught,

1. To know themselves *sinful*, this is a lesson which the prodigal had learnt, when he was brought to acknowledge and confess saying; Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, (Luke xv. 18.) as was *Paul* also, when he said, I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. Rom. vii. 18. — How sinful then must that heart be, in which dwells *no good thing*; and yet this is the picture of every *natural* man's heart upon the earth. — But

2. They are taught also to know their *own helplessness*, if taught of God; they therefore frequently utter the expression of the *Prophet*, saying, O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake thou for me, (Isai. xxxviii. 14.) or in the language of *Peter*, they cry saying, *Lord, save me*, (Matt. xiv. 30.) being made sensible that without Christ they can do nothing. John xv. 5. — Again,

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3. They

3. They are taught to *know* also their own *ignorance*; this made David cry unto God saying, lead me in thy truth, and *teach* me; Psal. xxv. 5. and from a view of the excellency of this glorious *teacher*, Job might well say, who *teacheth* like him? Job xxxvi. 22.

Secondly, They are taught to *know Christ* and *rely* upon him, as their way of *life* and *salvation*. They are taught of God to know,

1. The *suitableness* of his *righteousness*, it being just such an one as the *law* requires, and *they* want. This righteousness Christ hath wrought out, the Father imputes, and the Spirit teaches men to embrace, and rejoice in, saying, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. Isai. xlv. 24.—They are taught

2. The *completeness* of his *atonement*, he having put away *all* his people's sins from before God, by the sacrifice of himself. Heb. ix. 26.—Again,

3. They are taught also the *riches* and *efficacy* of his *gracefulness*, that it is out of it, all his people receive grace for grace; John i. 16. and they are taught thereby to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world. Titus ii. 12.—And in short

4. They are taught to *embrace Christ*, as their *wisdom*, *righteousness*, *sanctification* and *redemption*, (1 Cor. i. 30.) and as their Saviour from the charge, punishment, guilt, love, and the dominion of sin.

But *Thirdly*, those who are taught of God, are taught to *use the means of grace*. They are found frequently *praying* to God, *reading* his word, as well as *hearing* it preached, in which means they are taught also to *profit*; for it is said, in Isai. xlviii. 17. I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit. Now with respect to *profiting*, I apprehend there are many mistakes made among professors of religion.

Some

Some people think (for instance) that they do not profit under the word, unless they *shed tears*. But be it remembered, there may be many tears shed, when there is no *real profit*; and on the contrary, a person may be *profited*, when no tears are shed. Now no person can be profited under the word, any further than his mind is *instructed*, either into a sense of his state, of the goodness of God, or of the important truths of the gospel, however he may otherwise be affected, and therefore would do well, to examine into the cause of his tears. For I am sadly afraid, that there are many who *date their conversion*, from dropping a few tears under a sermon, without being brought either to a real sense of their *sinful state* by nature and practice; or of a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. There are many ways by which people may be affected without being profited; as for instance, the *manner* and *natural* tone of some ministers' voices, are calculated to draw tears from the eyes of their hearers, as also are *tragic stories*, and yet they may be no otherwise affected, than by a *tragedy* performed on the stage. Nay, a person may be deeply *affected* at hearing the *sufferings* of Christ set forth, without any knowledge of his *interest* in them, or even of seeing his need thereof; and consequently not profited, but his mind left *barren* and *uninstructed*. I have no objection against seeing a man affected under the word, if it spring from a feeling sense of the truths which are advanced; for then, and then only, the *effect* will be lasting on his mind.—But if it be only the *passions* that are affected, there will be no lasting effect left on his mind; and all the man has for his consolation is, that he felt himself wonderfully affected under the word, but he can tell neither *why*, nor *wherefore*.

The deception may be discovered thus; if people be really profited under the word, the effect thereof

will be *lasting*, and the *truths* of the gospel will be heard and embraced by them, let them be delivered by whomsoever they may. But if it be only *passion work*, and they come under a minister whose preaching is more calculated to *instruct* his hearers, than to *affect* their *passions*, such characters grow *lax* in their attendance, the truths of the gospel are disregarded by them, and these *passion-flowers* soon drop off, without yielding any fruit to the glory of God : which demonstrates the work to be of man, and not of God.

SERMON VII.

Isai. iii. 10, 11.

Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.—Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

THIS text informs us of two different sorts of people to be met with in the world, that is to say, the *righteous*, and the *wicked*; the former, are those who are living after the spirit; and the latter, are those who are living after the flesh. It teaches us also, how these different characters are to be addressed by God's ministers; they are to say unto the *righteous* that it shall be *well* with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings; but on the contrary they are to say, *woe* unto the *wicked*! it shall be *ill* with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him—In meditating on these words let us attend,

- I. To these two Characters, and
- II. To the Import of what is to be said to them.

The characters to be attended to in this text are, the *righteous*, and the *wicked*.—

First, the righteous.—Now this character is due to no one in a state of *nature*, since it is expressly said, there is none righteous no not one. Rom. iii. 10. But it is a character which is due to every *gracious* person under heaven, who is righteous by *imputation*, *internally* and *externally*.

1. By *imputation*, for Christ having wrought out a righteousness according to the requirements of the law; the Father imputes that righteousness to all his own beloved and chosen people; in which righteousness it is, that they are pronounced blessed, even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God *imputeth* righteousness, Rom. iv. 6. from whence we may learn, that the doctrine of *imputed righteousness*, is a scriptural doctrine, whatever men may say to the contrary.—But every gracious person is

2. *Righteous internally*, and the way they become so, is by the regenerating power of God's spirit in their hearts; in which act they are made partakers of the divine nature, by which they escape the corruption that is in the world through lust, 2 Pet. i. 4. and are enabled to love God, and live to him.—Therefore they become,

3. *Righteous externally*, that is in the life and conversation, since every such character lives soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, (Tit. ii. 12.) for they walk not after the *flesh*, or according to the dictates of *corrupt nature*, but after the spirit; that is, according to the dictates of the *divine nature*, of which every regenerated person is made the

happy partaker, as well as according to the dictates of the spirit of God, who leads and guides them into all truth. John xvi. 13.—

The next character, which presents itself to our view in the words of my text is, *Secondly, the wicked, who are so, by imputation internally, and externally.*

1. By *imputation*, this must appear evident to every attentive reader of God's word, because *Adam* acted not as a *private* person, but as a *public head* and representative to all his posterity; and what he did with respect to breaking God's law, or disobeying his maker, was charged to the account of all his descendants, I mean so far as what relates to his *first* act of disobedience, for after that, observe, he ceased to be a *covenant head*; so that we are not chargeable with *all* Adam's sins, but only with his *first* act of rebellion against God. Therefore says the Apostle; by the offence of one, or (as the margin reads it) by that *one offence* judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Rom. v. 18.—But they are

2. *Wicked internally*; that is, they come into the world with a corrupt nature, this appears plainly from what David expresses, where he says, behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Psal. li. 5. And this corruption is become so general, that it not only reaches to all mankind, but extends also, to every *power* and *faculty* of their souls—accordingly we are informed, by the Lord himself, that he saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil continually. Gen. vi. 5.—From hence it is that men become

3. *Wicked externally*, for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, (Matt. vii. 18.) and again, Christ tells us, out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts,

false witness, blasphemies, (Matt. xv. 19.) and in short every act of wickedness which is discovered in the life of man, proceeds out of the heart, which is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Jer. xvii. 9.—But let us attend

II. To the Import of what is to be said to them—
And

First, we are to say to the righteous it *shall be well* with them, in *life*, at *death* and *for ever*.

1. In *life*, for the righteous shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands, shall grow stronger and stronger, (Job xvii. 9.) because we are told by David, that the Lord *loveth* the righteous. Psal. cxlvi. 8.—But it shall be well with them

2. At *death*, for mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace, (Psal. xxxvii. 37.) and again said David, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Psal. xxiii. 4. And if God be with the righteous, either in life or death, it must be well with them.

But it shall be well with the righteous also

3. *For ever*, for says the Psalmist, the righteous shall be in *everlasting* remembrance. Psal. cxii. 6. They will never be forgotten of God, nor yet forsaken by him, since he assures us, he will never leave nor forsake them. Heb. xiii. 5.

But we are told also

4. They shall eat the fruit of their doings, that is, they shall enjoy that peace and tranquillity of mind, which flows in connexion, with *living to God*, and *walking with him*. Therefore David said, when speaking of the statutes and judgments of the Lord, in keeping them, there is great reward. (Psal. xix. 11.) Mark, David did not say, *FOR keeping them*, but

IN

IN keeping them there is great reward.—But on the contrary we are to say,

Secondly, Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him—that is, with *him* who lives and dies in a state of rebellion against God—for he lives a *woful life*, he dies also a *woful death*, and he will have a *woful resurrection* at the last day; for they that have done evil (and continued so to do to the end of their lives) shall come forth, we are told, to the resurrection of *damnation*, John v. 29. and such will have also, a *woful sentence* passed on them, which is contained in these words, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Matt. xiv. 41. Well, therefore may it be said, that it shall be ill with them—it is ill with them

1. In this life, for they live in a state of alienation from God. Eph. iv. 18.

2. It is ill with them also, *at death*, for the wicked is *driven* away in his wickedness, Prov. xiv. 32.

3. It will be ill with them hereafter, for the wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God. Psal. ix. 17.—Here it is,

Lastly, that they shall eat the *fruit* of their doings, intimating, that men's punishment will be just, as it is the fruit of sin, which is of their *own doing* and not of God's; therefore said the Apostle, the wages of sin is death, (Rom. vi. 23.) that is to say, both *natural*, and *eternal* death.

SERMON

S E R M O N VIII.

Gen. vi. 9.

*—Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations,
and Noah walked with God.—*

THE former part of this chapter gives us an account of the wickedness of the world, which is taken notice of by God, and upon which he determines to destroy it. But Noah, we are informed, is excepted who found favour with God, and of whom it is said in the words of my text, that Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.—In which words are contained two things,

- I. Noah's Character, and
- II. Noah's Privilege.

First, let us attend to Noah's Character, a part of which is contained in the following words, *Noah was a just man*, or a justified man, that is, a man who was free from condemnation,

1. *In the sight of God*, as every good man is. But then be it remembered Brethren, that Noah was not a justified man before God, by his own works of righteousness, but by the righteousness of Christ, the promised seed, as evidently appears from various parts of God's word, and is one branch of that grace or favour, which Noah found with God.

The Apostle Paul tells us, that by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in (God's) sight, (Rom. iii. 20.) or free from condemnation before

before him. But the way by which all God's people are justified *before him* is, by the *righteousness* of *Christ*, consisting of his active and passive obedience, being put to their account.—Therefore we are told, that blessed is the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness, (Rom. iv. 6.) and to make it appear an act of grace, (or favour) we are told by the Apostle, that we are justified *freely* by his *grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Rom. iii. 24.—Thus was Noah, and thus are all the people of God justified before him, or in his sight.—But,

2. Noah as a *gracious man*, (no doubt) was *justified*, or freed from condemnation also in *his own conscience*, and enjoyed peace therein.—This was the blessed privilege of the *publican*, of whom it is said, he went down from the temple to his own house *justified*, or free from condemnation, (Luke xviii. 14.) not before God *only*, for in that sense he went up to the temple justified, as all God's elect are; (Rom. viii. 33.) but in his *own conscience* also, which I conceive to be the meaning of the Apostle, where he speaks of being justified *by faith*, (Rom. v. 1.) for *faith* justifies no man in *God's sight*, Christ's righteousness does that, as before observed; but in a way of believing, men are freed from condemnation in their conscience, and enjoy therein peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.—But,

3. Noah was a *just* or *justified* person also, in the *sight of man*, which was a manifestation to them, that he was justified in the two above-mentioned senses, so far as his outward conduct could be any rule to judge by. This appears to me to be the meaning of James's expression, where he says,—*to see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*; James ii. 24. for *faith without works is dead* being alone, (James ii. 17.) and
though

though works cannot justify us before God; yet they may justify, or free us from *censure* before men.

But another feature of Noah's character is contained in these words—*perfect in his generations*, by which word perfect,

1. We are not to understand *sinless*; for we are told, he found favour with God, which he would not have wanted, had he been a sinless man.—But,

2. The word *perfect*, is explained in the margin, by the word *upright*; and therefore as Noah was a just or justified man, so also he was an *upright* one, that is, he was made

Upright in heart, Psal. lxxiv. 10.

Upright in his walk, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. and

Upright in conversation. Psal. xxxvii. 14.—

This was the character of Noah observe, in his *generations*; that is, in *both* the generations in which he lived, namely in that *before* the flood, as well as in that *after* it.—We are come now to take notice of

II. Noah's Privilege, which is pointed out in these words—*Noah walked with God*,—which shews,

1. That they were *agreed*, for how can two walk together except they be agreed. Amos iii. 3. Now this agreement is found in no *natural* man, for said the Apostle, the carnal mind is enmity against God, (Rom. viii. 7.) but it is to be found in all those, who like Noah have been renewed in the spirit of their minds, by the spirit of God.

2. By Noah's walking with God, it appears that he had some *knowledge* of him; and so has every regenerated person as well as Noah; for they know him the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. John xvii. 3.

3. Noah's

3. Noah's walking with God, seems moreover to indicate some *love between them*; yes Brethren, God on his part loves his people, with an everlasting love; and when they like Noah become regenerated by the grace and spirit of God, they are brought to love him, from whence their love becomes mutual. Again,

4. Noah's walking with God indicates also, that there was *fellowship or communion* between them; and thus it is said by the Apostle John,—truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ; (1 John i. 3.) as it is also with the Holy Ghost; therefore we find when the Apostle was taking his leave of the Corinthians, he said, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the *communion* of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. (2 Cor. xiii. 14.)

5. When it is said that Noah walked with God, it undoubtedly means that he walked *agreeable to the word of God*, and that he was diligent in all the ordinances of God; for had it not been so, he would not have been a companion with God; for he tells us, if you walk contrary to me,—I also will walk contrary to you. Levit. xxvi. 21—23.—But,

6. Whosoever walk agreeable to the word and will of God, walk by faith, (2 Cor. v. 7.) and walk uprightly, not leaning to *Antinomianism* on the one hand, nor to *Legality* on the other, and such will experience as Noah did, that walking with God is

An honest walk, 1. Thes. iv. 12.

An humble walk, Micah vi. 8.

A safe and sure walk, Prov. iii. 23. and

A desirable walk, both in *life* and in *death*, and they being found *worthy* (or meet) shall walk before God in white, for ever and ever. Rev. iii. 4.

S E R M O N IX.

Gal. v. 4.

—Ye are fallen from Grace.

THE Apostle begins this chapter with an exhortation to the Galatians, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free; advising them, not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage: Informing them at the same time, that if they were circumcised, Christ would profit them nothing; but in that case they would become debtors to do the whole law, and might be addressed as in the words of my text,—Ye are fallen from Grace. In meditating on which words, let us attend

- I. To the *Persons* addressed; and
- II. To the *Charge* brought against them.

First, we may observe, that the persons addressed or spoken to in this text are, not *all* the Galatian church, but some of them *only*, who had been drawn aside from the truths of the gospel, by false teachers; and especially from the doctrine of justification *before* God, by the righteousness of Christ.—For

2. They are pointed out in the words before the text, as a people who expected justification by the works of the law, now to be justified is to be declared innocent, or free from condemnation; but no man can be free from condemnation in the sight of God, by his own works; for says the Apostle, by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, (Rom. iii. 20) for no man can be free from condemnation, by his *own* obedience to that law,

of which he has formerly been a transgressor.-----
Therefore it is

3. That the matter of a sinner's justification before God, is the active and passive obedience of Jesus Christ, who in his *life* perfectly fulfilled the law, and thereby wrought out a complete righteousness; and in his *death* suffered the penalty thereof, in his own body on the tree. Accordingly we are told by the Apostle, we are justified freely by *his grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; Rom. iii. 24. and the Prophet tells us, this is the name whereby (Christ) shall be called, the Lord our righteousness. Jer. ii. 3--6. This is that righteousness, in which all God's *chosen ones* stand justified before him, or free from condemnation in *his sight*; and this we find is the result of his grace, or of his love and favour towards them, and in consequence of his becoming their surety.—Now this doctrine, was not opposed by the false teachers in the Apostle's time *only*, but is opposed also by every such character even to the present day; and whosoever attend to them, so as to be led astray by them, will dishonour God and distress their souls.—But let us attend,

II. To the *Charge* brought against such, which is, ye are fallen from grace—now, to investigate this point we may observe

1. That by the term *grace*, we are sometimes to understand God's *sovereign* and *eternal love*, accordingly we are informed by the Apostle, by *grace* are ye saved, Eph. ii. 8. intimating, that the salvation of all God's people, springs from God's free and sovereign love.—But then be it remembered Brethren, that no man ever *did*, or ever *can* fall from grace in this *sense* of the word; since those who were, are now, and ever will be the objects of his love, for we are told, he will rest in his love. Zeph. iii. 17. Be-
sides

sides we are informed also, that he loves with an everlasting love, (Jer. xxxi. 3.) but it must be a strange everlasting love, which began as it were yesterday, and may end to-morrow.—Again, sometimes by the term *grace*, we are to understand,

2. The *grace* of God in the hearts of regenerated ones, this I presume is the meaning of the Apostle's words, grow in *grace*, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. iii. 18.—But we may observe here also, that it is impossible that any one should fall from *grace* in this sense of the word, any more than in the former; for if they could, then Christ's sheep might perish, but he says they never shall, nor shall any pluck them out of his hands. John x. 28. Should any say they may pluck themselves out, we reply, if so, then they must perish; but Christ says, they never shall.—Some indeed think, they shall never perish while they remain *sheep*, and this we believe to be true; consequently they never can perish at all, seeing, that they will always remain *sheep*, for it is an unprecedented thing, for sheep to become goats.—Besides we are told in the above text, that Christ gives unto his sheep *eternal* life, and if so, they must live for ever.—But

3. Sometimes by the term *grace*, we are to understand the *doctrines* of *grace*; this I conceive to be the meaning of the word, where the Apostle says, the *grace* of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, (Tit. ii. 11, 12) and thus are all men externally taught to act, wheresoever the *doctrines* of *grace* are preached by the ministers of the everlasting gospel. Now in this sense of the word it is, in which these Galatians fell from *grace*, that is to say, from the *doctrines* of *grace*; they fell from the doctrine of justification by

grace, through the redemption of Christ, into the doctrine of justification by the *works* of the law, contrary to what the Apostle had taught them, namely, that by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. Rom. iii. 20. And whosoever profess to embrace the doctrines of the gospel, and afterwards drop those doctrines and take up with erroneous ones, whatever may be the cause thereof, may be addressed in the words of my text—Ye are fallen from grace, that is, not from the *love* of God, for that remains ever the same towards the objects of it; Jer. xxxi. 3. nor yet from grace as a *work* of the spirit in the *heart*, for he that begins that, will carry it on and finish it; Phil. i. 6. but from the *doctrines* of grace many do fall, as these Galatians did; and take up with doctrines equally as erroneous and dangerous, as they did.

SERMON X.

Luke i. 68.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed HIS PEOPLE.

IN this chapter is contained Luke's preface—an account of the *conception* of John the Baptist, and that of Christ; it contains moreover, an account of the nativity and circumcision of John, of whom it is said, the hand of the Lord was with him—it informs us likewise, that Zacharias his father was filled with the Holy Ghost; and said in the words of my text—Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.—In discour-
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ing on which words, it will be necessary to attend to three particulars ;

- I. The *People* alluded to,
- II. Their *Privilege* pointed out, for which
- III. The *Lord God of Israel* ought to be praised.

First, with respect to the people alluded to, they are called—*his people*, by which words we are not to understand all mankind at large, but those who are called his *sheep*, for whom Christ laid down his life ; John x. 15. or his *Church*, which he has purchased with his own blood. Acts xx. 28. Now these are the people spoken of by Paul in his epistle to Titus, where it is said, he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from *all iniquity*, and purify unto himself a **PECULIAR PEOPLE**. Tit. ii. 14. These may be called God's people, because they are

1. The people of his *love* ; agreeable to which idea the Prophet says, the Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an *everlasting* love. Jer. xxxi. 3. and the Apostle says, but God who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he hath loved us, even when we were *dead in sins*. Eph. ii. 4, 5. Mark, the Apostle does not tell us that God loved them, when they were converted only, but even when they were dead in sins, and that is the reason why they were converted, since conversion to God is a *fruit* of his love, and not the cause thereof.—But,

2. They are his people also by *choice*, for as a fruit of his love towards them, he chose them in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that they might be holy and without blame before him, in (or through) love ; (Eph. i. 4.) as much as though the Apostle had said, this eternal choice, and the ends which God had in view in making it, were the result

of that love, which he bore towards his people before the foundation of the world.—But let us proceed,

II. To the Privilege pointed out, it is contained in these words, he hath *visited* and *redeemed*—

First, by the visit mentioned in this text, the incarnation of Christ is doubtless intended.—And this visit may be called,

1. A *necessary* visit both for *Christ* and his *people*.—It was necessary for Christ, in order to fulfil his covenant engagements with his Father, which he could not have done, had he not came and taken upon him our nature. But it was necessary also for his *people*; for without this visit there would have been no *righteousness* wrought out, nor *atonement* made for the sins of any of them, since without shedding of blood there is no remission. Heb. ix. 22.—But this visit was,

2. A *promised* visit, this may be gathered from Gen. iii. 15. where the Lord said to the Serpent, I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. For which purpose (said God) I will bring forth my servant the **BRANCH**; (Zach. iii. 8.) which words no doubt contain a promise of that visit spoken of in the words of my text.—And as it was a promised visit, it was therefore,

3. A *looked for* one, this appears plain (I think) from the conduct of Anna, of whom we read in the gospel of Saint Luke, and of whom it is said, that she spoke of him (that is of Christ) to all them that looked for redemption in Israel. Luke ii. 38. But this visit of which I am now speaking, was

4. A *joyful* one. This is evident from the Angel's address to the shepherds, when this illustrious visitor first made his appearance in this lower world:

world; and from that glorious doxology which was sung by the heavenly Host on that occasion, which are recorded in Luke ii. 10, 14. and read thus, Behold, I bring you good tidings of *great joy*—glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward Men.—But

Secondly, another part of the privilege pointed out, is *redemption*; for says the text, he hath visited and redeemed his people.—Which evidently implies that *his people* were in bondage as well as others; and that, not only to *sin* and the curse of the law; but also to God's wrath as considered in Adam, in whom even God's own people themselves are by nature children of wrath (that is deserving of wrath) even as others. Eph. ii. 3. But blessed be God, Christ hath redeemed them,

1. From *sin*, agreeable to which the Apostle says, he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from ALL INIQUITY. Tit. ii. 14. Mark the expression Brethren, Christ hath redeemed his people from *all iniquity*; that is, from all their *original* as well as *actual* transgressions.—But he hath redeemed them

2. From the *curse* of the *law*, and this appears very plain from the Apostle's words, where he says, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, (by) being made a curse for us. Gal. iii. 13. Observe ye children of God, Christ *hath redeemed* us from the *curse*, which makes it utterly impossible that ever any of his redeemed people should go to Hell, as some say they may; for if so, that would prove that they were not redeemed from the *curse*, and consequently would make the Apostle appear a liar.—Besides we are told,

3. That Jesus hath delivered us from *wrath* to *peace*; 1 Thes. i. x. which also must be a falsehood, if any of his redeemed people could be punished in Hell.

Hell. Therefore having thus redeemed his people, he will take care that they shall be saved from their enemies, and from the hand of all that hate them, that they may serve God in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of their life. Luke i. 71, 75.—Now for all this remember,

III. The Lord God of Israel ought to be praised.

1. The *Father* ought to be praised for *bringing*, *abusing*, and *blessing* his people in Christ before the world was—

2. The *Son* ought to be praised for visiting and redeeming his people, and for every other expression of his love and favour to them—And

3. The blessed *Spirit* ought also to be praised, for *revealing* these truths in his word, and for *manifesting* them to the souls of his people, all of whom will join in the words of my text and say, blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people—And thus we find.

Such will praise God with their *lips*, as David did, when he said, because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee; (Psalm lxxiii. 3.)

As they will also in their *lives* and *conversations*, by a circumspect walk. Eph. v. 15.

SERMON XI.

Luke ii. 14.

Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men.

THE former part of this chapter furnishes us with an account of Augustus taxing the Roman Empire—

—of Joseph's going from *Galilee* to *Judea*, with Mary his wife (who was great with child) in order to be taxed—it informs us also, that while they were there, Mary brought forth her first born son, wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn—It informs us likewise, of the Angel's appearing to the shepherds, while they were watching over their flocks by night; who being surprised at the appearance, were addressed by him, with, fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a SAVIOUR which is CHRIST the LORD—and suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, in the words of my text, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.—In these words are contained three things for our consideration,

- I. The *End* of Christ's coming,
- II. The *Effect*, and
- III. The *Motive* thereof.

First, as to the *End* of Christ's coming, we are told in this text, is glory to God in the highest.—And here let it be observed in general, that in the coming of Christ is displayed the glory of all the perfections of God; as

1. It displays the glory of his *love*, of which the coming of Christ into this lower world is a glorious *manifestation*. Accordingly we find, that so great was the love of God to his people, that he gave his only begotten Son *to* and *for* them, (John iii. 16.) and the Apostle John, when speaking on this subject says; herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John iv. 10) From whence

whence we may learn, that the coming of Christ, is a display of the glory of God's love to the sons of men. And as it displays the glory of his love, so also it displays

2. The glory of his *wisdom*, which manifestly appears in contriving the plan of man's redemption, so, as that the sinner may be honourably acquitted, and yet his sin atoned for, to bring about which design we are informed, a *surety* is provided, on whom the Father laid, (or caused to meet) the iniquity of all his people. *Isai. liii. 6.* Agreeable to which the Apostle says, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them. *2 Cor. v. 19.* Thus did Jesus the *surety* take his people's sins upon himself, in order to free them from the *charge* thereof, and from the punishment of course.—But the coming of Christ displays also,

3. The glory of his *justice*, which evidently appears in God's punishing his *own Son*, when the sins of his people were charged to him. Accordingly we are informed, that he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. *Isai. liii. 5.* And although it is said, he did no violence (to God's law) neither was deceit found in his mouth, yet we are told, that it pleased the Lord to bruise *him*, (*Isai. liii. 9, 10.*) and to spare the people, whose cause he had undertaken; in all which, *justice* shines resplendently bright, while *mercy* flows to the sinful sons of Adam.—Again, the coming of Christ displays,

4. The glory of his *holiness*, for sin being that accursed thing which his soul hateth, wheresoever it is charged, or on whomsoever it is found, there it must be punished. And to inflict punishment where sin is found, is what the holiness of God's nature binds him

him to do, therefore we are told, that he spared not his *own Son*, but delivered him up for us all, Rom. viii. 32. and if you wish to know who these (us all) are, read the following verse, (namely, 33d) and you will find them to be *God's Elect*. From what has been said, we may see, that the end of Christ's coming into the world was, glory to God in the highest.—Proceed we to take notice of

II. The *Effect* of his coming, which the text tells us is—*on earth peace*.—And here let it be observed ;

1. That Christ has made peace (on God's part) by the blood of his cross, Col. i. 20. that is, by that blood which he shed, when he hung upon the cross. Therefore we are told by the Apostle, when writing to the Ephesians and speaking of Christ ; that *HE* is our *PEACE*, that is our *peace-maker*. Now this peace is an *honourable* peace, for the Father hath received of Christ all that the law can require, and that justice can demand ; in consequence of which, this peace must be a *lasting*, yea, an *everlasting* peace.—But

2. When it is said——*on earth peace*, it includes moreover the enjoyment of peace in the conscience ; agreeable to which idea the Apostle says, therefore being justified, by faith we have (or possess) peace with God, through (the coming of) our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. v. 1. Now this peace is the gift of Christ to his disciples, as appears by his own words, where he says, my peace I give unto you. John xiv. 27. From these observations we may learn, that the *effect* of Christ's coming is, *on earth peace*, as my text declares,—This leads me

III. To the *Motive* of Christ's coming, which we are informed, is *good will toward men*.

I. The

1. The *Father's* good will in this work is seen not only in giving his Son to his people, but also in sending him upon the errand of their salvation. Accordingly we are told, when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Gal. iv. 4, 5.—And,

2. The good will of *Christ* towards men appears also, in his suretyship engagements with his Father on behalf of all his people;—as it did also in his incarnation, or coming into this lower world, to perform his engagements with his Father, when he said, lo, I come to do thy *will*, O God, Heb. x. 10, whose will was, that he, as his people's surety should work out a *righteousness*, adequate to the requirements of the law, for a covering for all his people, and that he the just one, should *die* for the unjust, (as all his people were) in order that they might be brought to God, 1 Pet. iii. 8; that is, to the knowledge of, and into communion with God here, and to the enjoyment of God hereafter; all of which transactions bespeak Christ's good will toward men.—But,

3. The good will of God the Spirit also is seen in quickening the souls, in enlightening the understandings, and in sanctifying the hearts of all those who are beloved of the Father, and redeemed by the Son. Accordingly we are told, that Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Tit. ii. 14. From the whole then, it evidently appears, that the coming of Christ, is glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men.

SERMON XII.

John x. 5.

And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.

IN the former part of this chapter, *true believers* we find, are compared to *sheep*—*Christ* is spoken of as their head *shepherd*, and the *Church of God* is compared to a *sheep-fold*, into which he himself is called the *door*, by which door if any man enter nor, he is a thief and a robber; but he that entereth by the door, (that is, with a divine commission or by divine authority) is the shepherd of the *sheep*, whom we are told the *sheep* follow, because they know his voice.—But, as it is expressed in the words of my text, a *stranger* they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.—In discoursing on these words, I shall endeavour to *describe* to you

- I. The *Stranger*,
- II. The *People* who will not follow him, and
- III. Take notice of the *Reason* thereof.

First, then, I am to describe to you the *Stranger* mentioned in my text; by whom we are to understand (I think) an *unqualified minister*, one who is neither *called* of God, nor yet *sent* into the work by him. And a *stranger* is a very proper name for such a character, seeing he is one,

- i. To *himself*, as all natural men are, he is a *stranger* to his *lost* state and condition by nature, although the word of God informs us, that all

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have

have sinned and come short of the glory of God, Rom. iii. 23. and that every transgressor of God's law is pronounced accursed; (for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them, Gal. iii. 10.) yet the above-mentioned *stranger*, neither knows nor cares any thing about these things himself, and therefore is not likely to set them forth to others. Again, as he is a stranger to his lost state and condition, so he is also to

2. His own *helplessness*, for, although our Lord tells us, that without him we can do nothing; (John xv. 5.) that is to say, nothing which is spiritually good, yet this *stranger* thinks he can convert himself, and *work* himself into the favour of God, not being ignorant of God's righteousness, goes about to establish his own, and does not submit to the righteousness of God, (Rom. x. iii.) but tramples that under his feet. He does not consider that they who are in the flesh, (that is under the influence of corrupt nature) cannot please God, (Rom. viii. 8.) nor does he consider that conversion is God's work, and not man's, which must Ephraim say unto God, turn thou me, and I shall be turned. Jer. xxxi. 18. But to all these things the above-mentioned character is an entire stranger.

3. And as he is a stranger to himself, so he is also to God and his Christ, for it is true of him, and of every other man, while in a state of nature, that at that time ye were without Christ, that is to say, they were without any knowledge of God's love to him, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and *strangers* from the covenants of promise, having no (well-grounded) hope and without God in the world, Eph. ii. 12. that is, without any saving knowledge of, love to

or fear of God, for it is said of all the unregenerated, there is no fear of God before their eyes. Rom. iii. 18.—But the above-mentioned character is a stranger also,

4. To the *Gospel plan* of salvation, therefore it is, that he preaches such *strange* and antisciptural doctrine, for sometimes he preaches that salvation is by works, at other times he represents it partly by works and partly by grace, but Paul tells us, by GRACE ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the *gift* of God; *not of works*, lest any man should boast. Therefore whoever represent salvation to be of *works*, either in *whole*, or in *part*, they deny it to be of *grace*, and are doing the work of a *stranger*, or an *hireling*, as Christ calls him in the 13th verse of this chapter, out of which my text is taken; and of whom it is said, he *fleeth* (that is, when the sheep are beset by the wolf) because he is an *hireling*, and *careth not* for them.—This leads me

II. To describe the *People*, who will not follow this stranger. These are the *sheep* of Christ, which are spoken of in the verse before my text, and described in the 27th verse of this (tenth) chapter, where Christ says—my sheep hear my voice—I know them—and they follow me.

1. They hear his *voice*, that is, the voice of Christ in the gospel, both *externally* and *internally*, so which, they must be previously quickened by the Spirit of God, or they will not hear it, with any degree of profit to their minds. Thus he that is God (that is born of God) heareth God's word. in vii. 47. And as the sheep of Christ hear his voice, so also they know it, (verse 4th) that is, they know the gospel when they hear it, nor will any one do for them instead of it.—But,

2. Christ knows them, that is, he is perfectly acquainted with their persons—he knows them as

The Father's choice, Eph. i. 4.

His own purchase, John x. 15.

The Father's gift to him, John x. 29. and

As his own portion. Deut. xxxii. 9. And as he knows their *persons*, so also he knows their state, and all their enemies that surround them.—And we are told,

3. That they *follow* him; that is, they attend to his directions and become imitators of him, in the exercise of grace, as well as in the discharge of duties, and manifest themselves thereby to be his sheep; for mark, *hearing Christ's voice and following him*, do not make them sheep, for they were his sheep before, as appears from verse 16th, and Christ redeemed them as such, (verse 15th,) but they are thereby made appear to be his sheep, that is, when men hear Christ's gospel, love and embrace it, and become followers of him; they are then not made, but manifested to be the sheep of Christ.—Now it is said of these *sheep*,

4. That a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; that is, they will not sit under a minister, who is a stranger to himself—to God and his Christ—to the operations of the spirit—to the truths of the everlasting gospel, and the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, but will *flee* from him.—Which brings me

III. To take notice of the *Reason* thereof, which my text tells us is, because they know not the voice of strangers, that is, they do not approve or receive doctrine;

1. Because it is *erroneous*, being contrary to the word of God, as well as real christian experience.

For all the sheep of Christ, *who are saved*, will readily acknowledge, that they are saved by grace, and that it is God that hath created them anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, (Eph. ii. 10.) and not themselves.—But they do not approve of their doctrine,

2. Because it is *dangerous*, for errors in *judgment*, will most likely produce errors in *practice*, and though Christ's sheep shall never perish, yet errors will never fail of distressing their *souls*, any more than they will of dishonouring their God.—But another reason why Christ's sheep, who are regenerated, will not follow a stranger is,

3. Because they find it *unprofitable* so to do; for what the Lord said to the false Prophets of old, is applicable to these *strangers*; that is, I sent them not; therefore they shall not profit *my people* at all. Jer. xxiii. 32.

SERMON XIII.

2 Kings vi. 5.

—*Alas, master! for it was borrowed.*

THE verses before that out of which my text is taken, inform us, that the sons (or disciples) of the Prophet, for want of room to dwell in, said unto Eliha, let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take every man a beam, and make a place to dwell in; and he answered, go ye. And one of them said, be content to go with thy servant, and he said I will go. So Eliha went with them, and when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood in order to build their house with; and as one was felling a beam, the *axe's head* fell into the water,

and he said, in the words of my text,—alas, master for it was borrowed. From which words, three observations are fairly deducible.—We may observe,

- I. That Religion is sometimes accompanied with *poverty*—for this good man was obliged to borrow—
- II. That Religion is sometimes accompanied with *misfortunes*—for this good man lost the *axe*, and
- III. That Religion is at all times accompanied with an *honest disposition*,—

Which excites the christian to pay what he borrows; and which may be gathered from the words of my text, namely, alas, master! for it was borrowed, as much as though he had said, had it been my own property, I should not have been so distressed or uneasy about it.—But to each of these observations let us attend in their order.

First, then we are to observe, that Religion is sometimes accompanied with *poverty*, and many good men are obliged to borrow, which is by no means unlawful to do, when there is any probability of paying again; accordingly, we find the Prophet *Elisha* directing the poor woman whose husband was dead, and whose creditor was come upon her for the payment of his debts; to go and borrow vessels of all her neighbours, even empty vessels not a few, (2 Kings iv. 3.) which he would not have advised her to do, had it been an unlawful thing.—Again,

2. That religion and poverty accompany each other sometimes, is evident also from the condition we find *Peter* in, who when he was addressing the lame man, who laid daily at the gate of the temple to ask alms; he said unto him, silver and gold have

have I none; Acts iii. 6. hence we may observe, though Peter was a good, or a religious man, yet we find he was a poor man, a man who had neither silver nor gold.—This same truth is held forth likewise,

3. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus; the latter of whom is called in the parable a *beggar*, who desired nothing of the rich man, but to be fed with the crumbs that fell from his table, but these were refused him. It came to pass however, that this beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom, (Luke xvi. 20, 21, 22,) which not only proves, that this beggar was a good man, and possessed of real religion; but also, that *religion* and *poverty* sometimes accompany each other.—Another striking instance of this truth we have,

4. In the case of Christ himself, (as man) for when a certain scribe said unto him, master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest: Jesus said unto him, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head, (Matt. viii. 19, 20.) now I suppose, no one is inclined to doubt of the religion and piety of Jesus Christ, and yet we find his religion was accompanied with poverty; seeing the son of man had not where to lay his head. Let no one then suppose, that poverty is a mark of the want of true religion, since these cases prove to the contrary.—We proceed to observe,

II. That Religion is sometimes accompanied with *misfortunes*. This I think may easily be proved from the case of Job, of whom it is said, he was a perfect and upright man, and one that feared God and eschewed evil; Job i. 1. and yet in him we find *religion* accompanied with *misfortunes*, or calamities;

calamities; as well as in the case of him who lost the *axe*. This is abundantly illustrated by what is recorded concerning Job, in the above-mentioned *first* chapter, at the 13th verse of which, we are told, that there was a day, when his sons and his daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and there came a messenger unto Job, and said, the oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding besides them; and the *Sabeans* fell upon them and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, who said, the *fire of God* is fallen from Heaven, and hath burnt up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them. And while he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, the *Chaldeans* made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword.—And while he was yet speaking, there came also another and told him, there came a *great wind* from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I am escaped to tell thee. Job i. 13,—19. From all which circumstances it evidently appears, that real religion is sometimes accompanied with *misfortunes*. Therefore let none conclude, that misfortunes, however frequently they may happen, are proofs of the want of true religion.—We are come now to observe,

III. That Religion is at all times accompanied with an *honest disposition*; and although every honestly disposed person, is not a true christian; yet every true christian, is possessed of an honest disposition, and does what in him lies to pay every one his own, of whom he has borrowed. And

stead of imitating the wicked, who borroweth and payeth not again, (Psal. xxxvii. 21.) he is listening to the Apostle's advice, who says, owe no man any thing. Rom. xiii. 8.—That this is a disposition which is found in the real christian, appears

1. From the words of the Apostle Paul to the Hebrews, where he says, pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live *honestly*. Heb. xiii. 18. Mark, the Apostles were not willing to live honestly in *some* things *only*, but in *all* things.—And as they were willing in all things to live honestly themselves, so also the Apostle Paul

2. Exhorted the Thessalonians to do the same, saying, walk *honestly* towards them that are without, 1 Thes. iv. 12. as well as towards them, who are in christian fellowship with you. And the same Apostle when writing to the Romans, says also, provide things *honest* in the sight of all men, (Rom. xii. 17.) that religion may not be reproached by a dishonest disposition manifested by a frivolous conduct, either to saint or sinner. Therefore when the twelve Apostles were about to make choice of seven deacons, they called the disciples together, and said unto them, look ye out among you seven men of *honest report*. Acts vi. 3. From these considerations (I think) it plainly appears, that real religion is at all times accompanied with an *honest disposition* and will be manifested by an *honest walk*.

S E R M O N XIV.

Psal. xxv. 14.

*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him,
and he will shew them his Covenant.*

IN the Verses before my text, David expresses his confidence in God—prays for a suppression of his enemies; and that he might be led and taught by God.—He reminds him of his former mercies—begs him to pass by the sins of his youth, and to pardon his iniquity which was great—and then sets forth the privileges of God's people, telling us in the words of my text,—the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant.—In which words three things are observable, that is to say,

- I. The *Secret* of the Lord,
- II. The *Characters* with whom it is, and
- III. The *Covenant* which he will shew them.

First, with respect to the *Secret*, (which is a thing not known, Deut. xxix. 29.) four things are to be observed;

1. The *love of God* towards his people, may be called a secret, for though it has its existence in the mind and heart of God, previous to regeneration, since the Prophet calls it an everlasting love; (Jer. xxxi. 3.) yet it is a secret even to those, who are the real objects of it, while they remain in an unregenerate state.—But as God's love is a secret to the unconverted; so also is,

2. His *choice*, for though we are told by the Ap-

possible, that God hath chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, (Eph. i. 4.) yet this choice of God must remain a profound secret, even to those who are the objects thereof, while they are in a state of alienation from God.—And as the choice of God is a secret, so also

3. Is the *relationship*, which subsists between him and his people; for it evidently appears, that those who are God's beloved and chosen ones, are also his *adopted sons*. In which character it was, that Christ redeemed them, and as such he gathers them; therefore we are told, it was not only necessary that Jesus should die for his own people, among the Jews, but that also he should gather together in one, the *children of God* that were scattered abroad; (John xi. 52.) alluding to his own people among the Gentiles.—Therefore mark, they were children of God, (by adoption) even while they were scattered abroad, or in a state of alienation from God. Agreeable to which idea, the Apostle says, because *ye are sons*, (that is by adoption) God sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts. Gal. iv. 6.—Observe, God's sending forth the spirit, did not make them sons; but made them appear to be so; but even this also is a secret to all those, who are in an unregenerate state.—Again, we may observe also,

4. That the *subjects of redemption*, are also a secret to every one in an unregenerate state; for although we are told by our blessed Lord, that he laid down his life for *his sheep*; yet who those his sheep are, is a matter which is secret and known to none, in an unconverted state.—We come now

II. To the *Characters* with whom this secret is, my text tells us, it is with them that *fear the Lord*, which plainly proves,

I. That

1. That it is not with *natural men*, for it is full of such, there is no fear of God before their eyes; (Psal. xxxvi. i.) this is clearly manifested by their sinful practices from day to day.—But,

2. The Secret above-mentioned is with, or is made known to those who are *spiritual men*, made so by the spirit of God, who has put his fear into their hearts, Jer. xxxii. 40. not a slavish fear, nor the fear of man which bringeth a snare, but a filial childlike fear of offending God, which is manifested,

By hating evil, Prov. viii. 13, and

By departing from it, Prov. xvi. 6.—and God's everlasting *love*,—his eternal *choice* of his people in Christ,—the act of *adoption*, and *redemption* by Christ, are secrets made known experimentally to none but those who fear him, and their possessing that fear in their hearts, which is accompanied with a *hating* to, and *departing* from evil, is a manifestation that they are interested in the above-mentioned blessings.—This leads me to observe,

III. The *Covenant* which God will shew unto them.—And here we may observe,

1. That there is a covenant existing, or the Lord could not shew it unto those who fear him. This will appear clear to every one who reads with attention the word of God, which frequently makes mention thereof.—In Isaiah xlii. 6. the Lord says, when speaking of Christ,—I will give thee for a *covenant* of the people; that is, for the people's covenant head. This covenant is called in Isaiah liv. 10. a *covenant of peace*, because peace was a main article aimed at, and brought to pass in this covenant.—This covenant is likewise an everlasting covenant, for the blood of Christ is called

called the blood of the everlasting covenant. Heb. xiii. 20.—Of this covenant Jesus is called the mediator,—and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, (Heb. xii. 24.) called new, not because it was newly made, nor because newly revealed, but in respect to the order of succession, it taking place upon the former covenant being broken, and removed.—But we may observe again,

2. That a covenant is a mutual agreement between two or more parties;—and thus it was with the covenant of grace, of which I am now speaking; the Father demanded satisfaction for sin, saying, the wicked shall not be unpunished; Prov. xi. 21. and Christ agreed with, and promised his Father, saying, lo, I come to do thy will, O God; (Psal. xl. 7. and Heb. x. 7.) that is to fulfil the law, and to suffer its penalty on the account of his people.—The Father promised to uphold him as mediator for the work, (Isai. xlii. 1.) and that he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, Isai. liii. 11. accordingly in the fulness of time, he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them, (that is to say, all of them for whom he undertook) that were under the law. Gal. iv. 4. This he did by giving his life a ransom for them; and he dying as his people's surety, he is atoned for, justice is satisfied, and they are honourably acquitted.—But,

3. My text tells us, that he will *show* them his covenant. That is to say, he will shew them,

1. The necessity of it, and that without it, there could have been no salvation; for as men are law-breakers, had not Christ agreed to be a law-fulfiller, there could have been no righteousness, and consequently no salvation, for the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 1. Cor. vi. 9.

2. He will shew them the *date* of it, that it is an *everlasting* covenant, which is the result of that everlasting love, that God bore towards them.—He will shew them also,

3. The *riches* of it, that it is a covenant replete with mercies, God having blessed his people in the covenant, with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Eph. i. 3.

4. He will shew them the *stability* of it, for his covenant he will not break, nor alter the thing which is gone out of his lips. Psal. lxxxix. 34.—And,

5. He will shew them their *interest* in it, that Christ with all the blessings contained in this everlasting covenant of grace, belong to all those who fear God.

SERMON XV.

Psaln xxxvii. 37.

Mark the perfect man.—

DAVID in this Psaln takes no small pains, in order to persuade to patience and confidence in God, to describe the different states of good and bad men, and to give proper advice and instruction to the people of God, how to conduct themselves to the honour of God, and to the peace and comfort of their own souls.—He informs us that however the *wicked* may prosper for a time yet in the end they shall perish, and the *enemies* of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs, they shall consume away, but on the contrary, (says he) *mark the perfect man*—and behold the upright, for the

of that man is peace.—Two things present themselves in these words for our consideration, which are,

- I. The *Character*, and
- II. What is *Remarkable* concerning him.

First, the Character spoken of in the words of my text, is a *perfect man*; by which words we are not to understand a *sinless* man, because that idea would contradict the *confessions*, *petitions*, and *complaints* of the best of men, as well as supersede the direction which Christ gave his disciples.

1. Let it be observed, that the *confessions* of the Saints of God prove clearly, that there is not a *sinless* man in the world. Holy Job was constrained to confess, *I have sinned*, what shall I do unto thee? (Job. vii. 20.) and this too, after God pronounced him a *perfect* and an *upright* man, which plainly shews, that this perfect and upright man was not without sin. David also confesses himself a sinner, where he says, *I acknowledged my sin and mine iniquity I have not hid*; Psal. xxxii. 5. which plainly proves also, that this Saint of God as well as the former had sin, or he could not have acknowledged it. And as the doctrine of *sinless* perfection is contradicted by the *confessions* of the Saints, so also it is

2. By their *petitions*, which we meet with in the word of God. The above-mentioned perfect man Job says, when addressing his God, why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? Job. vii. 21. David also pleads with his God to the same purpose, and for the same blessing, saying, Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great. Psal. xxv. 11. From whence we may learn, that neither of these Saints of God, were free from the

acts of sin, and much less from the being thereof.—
But,

3. The *Complaints* of God's people, under a feeling sense of their corruptions, will serve likewise to prove, that the doctrine of a sinless perfection is unscriptural. For Paul an eminent Saint of God, when speaking of himself in that character, says, it is no more I that do it, but sin that *dwelleth in me*, (Rom. vii. 17.) which sufficiently proves, that Paul was not a sinless man, for had that been the case, sin would not have *dwelt in him*, and this in-dwelling sin he calls in the 24th verse of this chapter, *a body of death*; saying, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?—But again, the doctrine of sinless perfection supercedes also,

4. Our Lord's direction to his own disciples, to whom he said, after this manner therefore pray ye—*forgive us our debts*, plainly intimating, that they could not live without contracting debts, or committing sins. From these considerations it appears then, that by a *perfect man*, a *sinless one* cannot be intended. But the way God's people become perfect, is by their being in Christ Jesus, Col. i. 28. in whom they are perfectly *righteous*, perfectly *pardoned*, and from him perfectly *sanctified*.

1. They are perfectly *righteous*, in the righteousness of Christ, which the Father imputes to all his beloved ones; therefore blessed is the man, to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness. Rom. iv. 6.

2. They are perfectly *pardoned* also, in consequence of Christ's death, accordingly David tells us, (he) forgiveth all mine iniquities. (Psal. ciii.

3.) Mark brethren, the *perfection* of this act, it is a pardon

ardon of ALL our iniquities.—But we may observe likewise,

3. That they are perfectly *sanctified*, inasmuch, as in regeneration they are made the happy partakers of every *grace* or *fruit*, of the Holy Spirit; and as a child may be said to be perfect, if it come into the world with all its members; so is every child of God, as soon as he is born of God; because he partakes of all the graces of God's spirit. But, as a child is capable of growing in strength, so also is the christian capable of growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (2 Pet. iii. 18.) therefore, although the christian is perfect, as to the *number* of his graces, yet he is not perfect as to the *strength* of them,

For his Faith may increase, Luke xvii, 5.

His Hope may abound, Rom. xv. 14.

And his Love be multiplied. Jude, verse 2.

We come now to shew,

II. What is *Remarkable* concerning this man, and here let us observe

1. His *principle of action*, which is the *life of God* in his soul, that has been communicated to him by the blessed spirit of God, in consequence of his union to Christ. This life is remarkable for its duration, for (says Christ) I give unto them *eternal life*. John x. 28. Hence it is, that God's regenerated ones can never perish.—But,

2. Mark the perfect or regenerated man's *conduct in life*, and you will find, that the grace of God influences him to forsake sin and live to God; and in short, his life is a life of faith, Gal. ii. 20. and his walk a walk by faith. 2 Cor. v. 7. But,

3. Mark the perfect man's *portion or inheritance*, David says, the Lord is my portion, (Psal. lxxiii.

26.) and the Apostle says, when speaking of the christian's inheritance, that it is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away; (1 Pet. i. 4.) from which passages we may gather, that the perfect man's portion or inheritance is as durable, as it is great and valuable.—But,

4. Mark the perfect man's *end*, and you will find that the end of that man is peace.—From whence we may learn, that this *perfect*, or this regenerated man must die, that is, his time on earth will come to an end, since it is appointed unto men once to die. Heb. ix. 27. But then death is not a *curse*, but a *blessing* to the believer; therefore it is said, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, Rev. xiv. 13. one part of which blessedness is, that he ends his life in peace, for being justified in Christ's righteousness, by faith he hath peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; Rom. v. 1. being filled with all joy and peace in believing. Rom. xv. 13. In short, he lives in peace, and the God of love and peace is with him, in *life* as well as in *death*, which made David say, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Psal. cxviii. 4.

SERMON XVI.

John xiv. 6.

—*I am the way.*—

IN the verses before that out of which my text is taken, Christ comforted the minds of his disciples, against his departure out of this world by informing them, that he was going to prepare

a place for them, and that he would come again, and receive them to himself; in order that he and they might be for ever in the full enjoyment of each other; telling them at the same time, that they knew both the *place* to which he was going, as well as the *way* which led to it.—On which, Thomas said unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus answered and said unto him, in the words of my text, *I am the way*.—In speaking on which words, let us enquire,

- I. What Christ is the way *To*, and
- II. Into the *Properties* of this way.

First, as to what Christ is the way *To*, may easily be collected from the word of God, in which we are informed—

1. That Christ is the *way of access to the Father*, accordingly we find in the verse out of which my text is taken, Christ telling his disciples, that no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. He is the one mediator between God and man, (1 Tim. ii. 5.) and whoever attempts to go to God in any other way, can never meet with acceptance, nor enjoy the blessing which they stand in need of.—For as he is the way to the Father, so also he is,

2. The way to the enjoyment of all *spiritual blessings*, for we are told by the Apostle, that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, (or things) in Christ, (Eph. i. 3.) out of whose fulness it is, that all the people of God receive grace for grace; (John i. 16.) that is, not grace for the improvement of grace, but grace as a *principle* in the heart; for, or in consequence of God's grace, or love and *favour* towards them; or it may be read,
grace

grace upon grace, and may design the heaps of blessings, with which God blesses his people from day to day.—But

3. Christ is the only way to the enjoyment of a *complete righteousness*, which he has wrought out for all his own people, as well as brought in. Accordingly Daniel tells us, he (that is Christ) hath not only made reconciliation for iniquity, but also *brought in* everlasting righteousness; (Dan. ix. 24.) that is, that righteousness which the Father everlastingly *required*, and that the Son everlastingly *promised*; he in the fulness of time wrought out and brought in, for an everlasting covering to all his people. Thus therefore sings the Prophet, he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. *Isai. lxi. 10.*—Again, Christ is the way also by his *death*.

4. To the enjoyment of a *full and free pardon*, he having thereby made a complete atonement and satisfaction to divine justice for all those sins, which the Father laid upon him. Accordingly it is said of the two creditors mentioned in the gospel; he *frankly* forgave them both, (Luke vii. 42.) and by David of old, he forgiveth *all* thine iniquities, (Psal. ciii. 3.) that is, all thine *original*, as well as *actual* transgressions.—Christ is the way likewise,

5. To the enjoyment of *peace*, he having made peace by the blood of his cross. Col. i. 20. Therefore says the Apostle, he is our *peace*, (Eph. ii. 14) that is, he is our *peace-maker*, he is our *peace-giver*, and he is also our *peace-maintainer*; the gospel therefore is called the *gospel of peace*, (Eph. vi. 15) and the ministers thereof are employed in *preaching peace* by Jesus Christ. Acts x. 36.—Again, Christ is the way moreover,

6. To *spiritual* and *eternal* life. Accordingly we are informed by Christ himself, I *give* unto them (his sheep) eternal life. John x. 28. And the Apostle tells us, that eternal life is the *gift* of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. vi. 23. John also informs us, that God hath *given* to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son; (1 John v. 11.) therefore it is, that the Psalmist says, the Lord will *give* grace and glory. Psal. lxxxiv. 11.—
Proceed we to enquire,

II. Into the *Properties* of this way, under which kind of discourse we may observe,

1. That he is a *free* way, to all those who feel their lost state and condition by nature, for we find that Christ invites all such to come to him, saying, Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, (Matt. xi. 28.) and for their encouragement tells them, whosoever cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. John 6. 37.—But,

2. He is a *safe* way, for he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, (Heb. 7. 25.) as appears by a *persecuting* Saul, and an *adulterous* Magdalene, as it does also by the *dying* thief upon the cross; all these, as well as a cloud of other witnesses, who are mentioned in the word of God, went to Heaven by Christ, and are so many instances of the *safety* of this way, of which I am speaking.—But Christ is called likewise,

3. A *living* way. (Heb. x. 20.) He is the way in which all God's spiritual people walk, because he is the way through which their spiritual life flows, and enable them so to walk; for says the Apostle, your life is hid with Christ in God, (Col. iii. 3.) that not only your life of *grace*, but also your life of *glory*,

glory, which plainly proves Christ to be a living way, therefore, because I live (says he to his disciples) you shall live also. John xiv. 19.—We observe,

4. That He is the *only* way, for no man can come unto the Father, *but by me*, says Christ, in the verse out of which my text is taken; and in the Acts of the Apostles we are informed, that there is no salvation in *no other*, for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved. Acts iv. 12. From whence we find that Christ is the only way of coming to God, of enjoying righteousness, pardon, peace, grace here, and glory hereafter.

SERMON XVII.

Acts xvi. 14.

—Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

THE former part of this chapter gives us an account—of Paul's circumcising Timothy—the increase and establishment of the Church—the Faith—of Paul's having and obeying a vision by which he and his companions were led to Philippi—they went out of that city on the sabbath to a river side, where prayer was wont to be made where they sat down and spake to the women who resorted thither, and a certain woman named Lydia heard them—whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things, which were spoken of Paul.—From which words we may learn the things,

- I. That the *Heart* by nature is shut,
- II. That none but *God* can open it, and
- III. When opened the *Effects* are discovered.

First, the Heart being by nature shut, it is dark, ignorant, and void of every thing that is good.

1. It is *dark*, hence we find that Christ the day spring from on high, came to give light to them that sat in *darkness* and in the shadow of death; (Luke i. 79.) and when the Apostle was writing to the Ephesians, he to remind them of their natural state, told them, ye were sometimes *darkness*, (Eph. v. 8.) that is to say, while they were in a natural state, and such is the darkness of the mind by nature; that although Christ the light of the world shines, the *darkness* comprehendeth it not; (John i. 5.) agreeable to which the Apostle tells us, the natural man receiveth (or perceiveth) not the things of the spirit, (1 Cor. ii. 14.) and the reason is, because his heart is shut, and without a single ray of divine light from Jesus the Son of righteousness.—But

2. As the natural heart is dark, so also it is ignorant—therefore the Apostle told the Ephesians, that the Gentiles had their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their hearts, (Eph. iv. 18.) in which words the Apostle seems to suggest, that the ignorance of these Gentiles arose from the blindness of their hearts; and that alienation from God was the effect thereof.—And

3. As the natural heart is dark and ignorant, so also it is void of every good thing. Accordingly the Apostle tells us, I know that in me, that is in my flesh, or corrupt nature, dwelleth no good thing. Rom. vii. 18. And the Prophet informs us,

us also, the *heart* is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Jer. xvii. 9. What a picture is this of the human heart! for though there are in the world, such a vast number of deceitful things, yet the *heart* is deceitful *above* them all; and on account of the human heart is confirmed also by the Lord himself, where he informs us, that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was *only evil continually*. Gen. vi. 5. Mark, my fellow sinners, the strength of the language, the natural heart is not sometimes good and sometimes evil, but it is *only evil continually*. Hence we may learn, that the natural heart shuts in every thing that is *bad*, and shuts out every thing that is *good*.—But let us proceed,

II. To shew that none but *God* can open it.—For the text tells us, the *Lord* opened the heart of *Lydia*. Mark my brethren, it is not said that *Lydia* opened her own heart, nor yet that *Paul* opened it for her, but that the *LORD* opened it, and so he does also the hearts of all those, whom he regenerates by his Almighty power. And so fast is the heart locked, or barred against every good, that none but *God* can open it. Now there is implied in *God's* opening a sinner's heart,

1. A communication of *spiritual life*; therefore says the Apostle, you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1. To perform which act, the Lord *forcibly* and *irresistibly* enters the sinner's heart, as he did the heart of *Lydia* in my text, and the heart of *Saul* on his way to Damascus; Acts ix. 3, 4. and as he does also the heart of every one, on whom he now works.—But

2. There is implied in opening a sinner's heart,

a communication of heavenly light, accordingly the Apostle told the Ephesians, that the eyes of their understanding were enlightened, Eph. i. 18. and it is said of the disciples of Christ, that he opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. Luke xxiv. 45. From whence it is, that they see

Their lost state, Matt. x. 6.

Their helpless state, Hos. xiii. 9.—and

The way of salvation by Christ. Luke xix. 10.

But there is implied moreover in this act of opening the heart,

3. The *alluring* of the *will*, by which the Lord makes them willing in the day of his power, (Psal. cx. 3.) to forsake sin, and to cleave to Christ for life and salvation.—And we are told moreover, by an Apostle, that it is God who worketh in (us) both to *will* and to *do*, of his own good pleasure; Phil. ii. 13. and thus is the will sweetly and powerfully drawn Godward; the understanding being previously enlightened. But, mark brethren, the will is not *forced*, for to force the will would be to destroy it.—There is implied also in opening the hearts of sinners,

4. The *attraction* of the *affections*, which the Lord does by the discoveries of his love to them, and by shedding abroad his love in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them; Rom.

5. by which means the affections are turned to their proper channel; therefore it is that

They love God, 1. John iv. 19.

They fear God, Jer. xxxii. 40.

They delight in God, Song ii. 3.

And their desires are towards him; Isai. xxvi. 9.

As is the heart opened by the Lord, and becomes
 a receptacle for every good—it contains,

The good spirit of God, John xiv. 16.

The good work of God, Phil. i. 6.

And the good word of God, 1. John ii. 12. by which they are taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world. Tit. ii. 12.—We are come to observe,

III. The *Effects* of this operation—my text tells us, there was attention to the things spoken of Paul. Now what these things were, of which Paul was speaking we are not told, but without doubt they were things relating to the *gospel of Christ*.—And hence we may observe,

1. That where God opens the *heart*, there is an open *ear* also, to the ministry of the word, and a serious and eager *attention* to the things spoken, as appears by the words of the text.

2. Where there is an open heart, there is found also attendance on the ordinances of the Gospel, for *Lydia* was baptized and her household, or as the *Syriac* reads it, *Lydia* and her *Children*.

3. When God opens the heart, the *house* is opened also to his servants, for says *Lydia*, come into my house and abide there, and we are told she constrained them, verse 15th.—And,

4. There is no doubt but her *hand* also was open, to minister to the wants of the Saints, and to promote the cause and interest of him, who had thus graciously dealt with her. I leave then to some of the real effects of an open heart; and may the Lord grant, that they may be discovered in our outward deportment from day to day, for the Redeemer's sake.

SERMON XVIII.

Heb. x. 26, 27.

For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.—But a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

THIS passage of scripture is used by some, to prove that Christ *died* for those who perish, and that *true believers* may finally and totally fall from grace and perish everlastingly; neither of which can be true, since we are informed by the Prophet, that Christ shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; *Isai. liii. 11.* that is, he shall not only see that his people are *redeemed*, but he shall see also, that they are both *sanctified* and *glorified*; nothing short of which surely could satisfy Christ after all his toil, labour and sufferings on their account; nor will justice admit of any of those suffering in Hell; for whom Christ as their *surety* suffered on Earth—But in speaking on the words of my text, I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. What we are to understand by the *Knowledge of the Truth*;
- II. What this *wilful Sin* is, and
- III. Take notice of the *awful State* of those who commit it.

First, I am to shew what we are to understand, by the *Knowledge of the Truth*.—Now by the *truth* in the words of my text, we are to understand,

Christ and the way of salvation by him, of which truth there is,

1. An *experimental* knowledge; this I apprehend is what we are to understand, where our Lord, when addressing his disciples said—ye shall *know* the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John viii. 32.) for there is no knowledge, except that of an experimental nature, can have a tendency to free, or liberate the minds of God's people.—But again, besides this, there is also such a thing as

2. A *knowledge* of the truth in *theory*, or a *notion*, without the experience of it; this appears to have been the case with *Simon*, of whom it is said, that he himself believed also, and was baptized, and continued with Philip and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done; Acts viii. 13. and yet, notwithstanding what this man believed and confessed, the Apostle told him, I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Acts viii. 23. This was no doubt the case also with *Judas*, of whom it is said, he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry, Acts i. 17. which would not have been the case, had he not been acquainted with the knowledge of the truth in *theory*.

3. But the words of my text do not refer to an *experimental* knowledge of the truth, but to a *rational* knowledge of it, or a knowledge of it in *theory* only; for had the persons, of whom the Apostle was writing to these Hebrews, been possessed of an *experimental* knowledge of the truth, they would not have forsaken the *assembling* of themselves together, and have drawn back to perdition, as these characters did, as appears from the 25th and 39th verses of the chapter out of which my text is taken.—But let us proceed, as proposed.

II. To

II. To shew what this *wilful Sin* is.

1. By the *wilful Sin* alluded to in my text, we are not to understand the common infirmities of life, for then alas! none would be free from it, since in many things (says the Apostle) we all offend. James iii. 2.—Nor,

2. By this *wilful sin* are we to understand every *gross* act of sin, which may be committed by the people of God after regeneration, for if so both *David* and *Peter* must be found guilty of it, but their sins though *very great*, and attended with *aggravating* circumstances, did not amount to the sin on which the Apostle's eye was fixed, in the words of my text, since both these characters found mercy; and although they drew back for a time, it was not unto perdition.—But,

3. The *wilful sin* alluded to in my text, is the sin of *wilfully* and *knowingly rejecting Christ*, not rejecting him as *their Saviour* observe, but for rejecting him as the *Messiah* and *way* of salvation; thus too after they had received the knowledge of him as such, not an *experimental* knowledge as we observe, but a *doctrinal* knowledge; not a knowledge of this truth in the heart, but a *knowledge* in the head *only*.—This leads me

III. To take notice of the *awful State* of such, which is contained in these words,

There remaineth no more *sacrifice* for sin, which does not imply, that though there was a sacrifice provided for their *former sins*, there is none now; but when the Apostle says, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, he undoubtedly means, the sacrifice of Christ will never be *repeated*, nor will any other Saviour be provided; and seeing

ing they rejected him, they must perish without remedy.—But,

2. Another part of their *awful state* is described in the following words, that is to say, a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the *adversaries*; such characters may expect some visible judgment even in this *world*, but if they escape that, they will not escape the fiery indignation and wrath of God, in that which is to come.—But then, mark brethren,

3. This fiery indignation is *only* for *adversaries*, that is, for those who are adversaries to God and his Christ, and enemies to salvation by him, who will be addressed at the last as follows, but *not* mine *enemies*, who would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me. (Luke xix. 27.) and this will be the fate of all those, who *have trodden under foot the Son of God* (as do all such as under value his *sacrifice* and despise his *righteousness*) *and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith HE (that is CHRIST) was sanctified*, (as separated, for that part of his priestly office which he is now performing, by his intercession at his Father's right hand,) *an unholy (or common) thing*.—But, be it remembered Brethren, that no regenerate man, or man born of God, is an adversary to Christ, for all such are his *real friends*, and the language is, whom have I in Heaven but thee; and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee; Psal. lxxiii. 25. they esteem him as their best friend; and desire nothing so much as a knowledge of his friendship to them; and as for the counting the blood of the covenant, an *unholy thing*, it is impossible; for they daily experience the contrary, by having their conscience purged thereby, from dead works to serve the living God. Heb. ix. 14.

4. To what has been advanced on this subject, it may be objected, that the Apostle includes himself in the above-mentioned text; for it is said—*If we sin wilfully, &c.*—and if there were no possibility of the Apostle's so sinning, where then is the propriety of the expression? but observe, a *supposition* brings nothing into existence; and sometimes we find a supposition, even when the thing supposed is altogether impossible; as for instance, where our Lord said to the Jews, *if I should say, I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you.* Now the *proposition* itself was true, when both the parts of it were impossible; for it was impossible that Christ should say, he knew not his Father, and it was equally impossible, that he should be a liar like unto them, and so the proposition in my text is true, if it were spoken of real believers, though it is impossible that they should so sin, as to perish eternally, considering their security in Christ.

SERMON XIX.

Psalm lxxxix. 15.

Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.—

THE former part of this psalm treats of the covenant of grace, and of the promises therein contained; as well as of the mercy and faithfulness of God, in making and keeping the same. It contains, moreover some things concerning the Messiah and his Church; and of the latter it is said, in the words of my text, *blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.*—In meditating on which words, I shall endeavour to point out to you,

I. What

- I. What this *joyful Sound* is,
- II. What is implied in *Knowing* it, and
- III. The *Blessedness* of such.

First, as to the *joyful Sound* mentioned in my text, we need not hesitate (I think) to say, that the *Gospel* is intended thereby. Now this gospel is a sound of *liberty* to the captives, that is, to those who feel their captive state and condition; for although all men are by nature captives to sin and Satan, yet all men do not *know* or *feel* it; but for the sake of those who do, it is said by the Prophet, that Christ was sent to bind up the broken-hearted, (not the whole heart observe) and to proclaim liberty to the captives. *Isai. lxi. 1.* From whence we may observe, that the liberty of all those, who are feelingly sensible of their captivity, is procured by Christ, and proclaimed in the gospel, and all such characters as above described, are liberated by Christ, from the *curse* of a broken law, the hand of *justice*, and from *wrath* to come. — But the gospel sends forth

2. A sound of *rest* to the weary,—not observe to those who are wearying themselves in the *service* of sin; but to those who are weary of the *practice* of sin, and feel the burden thereof upon their consciences; to all such, Christ says, come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. *Matt. xi. 28.* Mark, ye convinced sinners, there is *rest* for you, which rest is to be obtained in a way of believing in, or coming to Christ, and ever remember also, that it must be received by you, as a free gift at his hands. — Again, this gospel sends forth a sound

3. Of *salvation* to those, who feel their lost and undone state; for of all such characters it is said, the Son of man is come to *seek*, and to *save* that which

which was lost. Mark, brethren, he came first to *seek* them, and having found them, and convinced them of their lost state by nature and practice, it is added, he came to *save* them, that is, with a present and with an everlasting salvation; and if this be not accomplished respecting all his Church and people, the design of the coming of the Son of man, must be entirely frustrated.—But the gospel sends forth moreover,

4. A sound of *victory* over all the christian's enemies; for Christ has conquered them all by his almighty power.

The world is overcome by him, John xvi. 33.

Sin is atoned for, Rom. v. 11.

Satan is conquered, Luke xi. 21, 22.

And Death vanquished Luke; xxiv. 34.—on which account it is, that the Lord directs his ministers to say, comfort ye, comfort ye my people, and ye comfortably to Jerusalem, cry unto her, her warfare is accomplished, (and) that her grief is pardoned, Isai. xl. 2. and so secure are we from all their temporal, as well as their spiritual enemies, that we are told, no weapon formed against them shall prosper. Isai. liv. 17.—But a sound is called,

A *joyful sound*, and it certainly proves so to every convinced sinner, nor is there any thing in the world so well calculated to encourage the *hopes* and scatter the *fears* of such characters, as the gospel, which is a uniform and consistent sound, of *full* salvation by Christ to all, who feel their lost and undone state, but to none else; for the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Matt. ix. 12.—Proceed we to point out,—

What is implied in *Knowing* it.—In order to which, it is necessary

1. That

1. That men should be *taught* this gospel, for when Philip asked the Eunuch, understandest thou what thou readest? his reply was, how can I, except some man should guide me. Acts viii. 30, 31. Accordingly we find our Lord, when he sent forth his disciples, said unto them, go ye therefore and teach all nations, Matt. xxviii. 19. that is to say, out of a lost, helpless, and undone state by nature, and of a salvation which I have wrought out. This therefore was the practice of the Apostles of Christ, to whom it is said, these men are the servants of the most high God, that shew unto us the way of salvation. Acts xvi. 17.—But then,

2. There is such a thing as knowing the gospel sound in *theory only*, which knowledge a man may attain unto, and yet not be the *blessed* man found of in my text; for many people may have right notions of the truths of the everlasting gospel, whose general deportment in life is diametrically opposite thereto.—But,

3. There is an *experimental* knowledge of the gospel sound, received by all those who are taught of God. For in a way of believing in, and relying on Christ, they enjoy that *liberty*, that *rest*, that *salvation*, and that *victory* over their enemies which the gospel proclaims to every convicted sinner, and of which I have been speaking.—What come now,

III. To point out the *Blessedness* of such, which is clearly seen in the following words to those in my text,—where we are told,

1. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance, that is, they shall enjoy the precious presence of God,—they shall enjoy the coveries of his love to them, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost in them, and these shall be enjoyed

by them, while walking in communion with God, and agreeable to his word.—And,

2. In thy *name* shall *they* rejoice all the day, that they who know experimentally the joyful sound, shall rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, in his *person*—in his *blood*—in his *righteousness*—and in his *salvation*, which are matter for the christian's rejoicing, even all the day long; and although the christian lives sometimes beneath his privilege, and is brought thereby into distress; yet the ground, or matter of his rejoicing, is always the same all the day long, and all the days of his life.—But,

3. In his righteousness shall they be exalted.—They are in this righteousness exalted now, from a state of condemnation (as considered in Adam) to a state of justification before God. They are exalted in this righteousness, from a state of beggars in the dunghill, to sit among princes.—And in this righteousness it is, that all the redeemed of the Lord shall in due time be exalted, from a state of *grace* on earth, to a state of *glory* in heaven, when they shall be brought into the presence of the king of kings, in clothing of wrought gold, and raiment of needle-work. Psal. xlv. 13, 14. Well may it be said then, as in the words of my text, blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.

SERMON XX.

Psal. cxv. 12.

The Lord hath been mindful of us; he will bless us.—

DAVID begins this psalm, with ascribing glory to God in the Heavens, assuring us, that he hath

hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.—He then proceeds to set forth the vanity of idols, and of them who put their trust in them: after which, he exhorts to confidence in God, who is the help and defence of his people; and then introduces the words of the text, saying, the Lord hath been mindful of us; he will bless us.—In discoursing on which words, I shall endeavour to point out to you

I. The *People*, and
II. Their *Privilege*.

First, with respect to the *People* alluded to in my text, by the word *us*; we are not to understand the carnal and unregenerate part of mankind, for though the Lord hath been mindful of them in a *providential* way, and in which sense he has blessed them; yet these cannot be intended in the words of my text. But the persons alluded to by the word *us*, are addressed in the 9th verse of this psalm;

1. Under the appellation of *Israel*, by which is meant, not *Israel literally*, but all the *spiritual* Israel of God are intended thereby; who have not only become wrestlers with God in fervent prayer through the quickening influences of his spirit, but who as *princes* have power with God, and have prevailed with him, (for Christ's sake) for the enjoyment of those blessings which they stood in need of. Gen. xxxii. 24,—29.—Again, these people with whom we have now to do, are described in the 11th verse of this psalm,

2. As a people who *fear the Lord*, and therefore cannot be carnal and unregenerate people, because it is said of them, there is no fear of God before their eyes. Psal. xxxvi. 1. Now by the fear of God, in the above-mentioned verse, we are

not to understand a *slavish* fear or dread of God, such as the wicked have, (1 Sam. xii. 18.) but a *child-like* fear is intended, such as is connected with trust in, or reliance on the Lord; and which also is manifested by an *hatred* to evil, and likewise a *departing* from it.——For the wise man tells us in one place, that the fear of the Lord is to hate evil, Prov. viii. 13. and in another place, that by the fear of the Lord men depart from it. Prov. xvi. 6. The people then alluded to in my text, by the word *us*, are not the wicked or carnal, and unregenerate people, as before observed, but the spiritual Israel of God; or in other words, those who fear the Lord and trust in him.

We come now to point out,—

I. Their *Privilege*—which is contained in these words, the Lord hath been *mindful* of us, he will *do* us.

First, the Lord hath been mindful of such, and it applies to JEHOVAH, *Father, Son and Spirit*.

1. The *Father's* mindfulness of his people appears towards them, not only in loving them with everlasting love, (Jer. xxxi. 3.) but also, in his covenant engagements with his Son Jesus Christ—choosing them in him, before the foundation of the world, and in blessing them in him, (as early) in all spiritual blessings; by which free and sovereign acts, all necessary provision is made for the present peace, and everlasting happiness of all his children.—But,

2. The mindfulness of *Jehovah the Son*, also appears towards his people, in becoming their *surety*, which act he took all their *debts* upon himself, that ever had been, are now, or that ever will be

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contracted

contracted by them, at any period of time was forever. But then, he not only took their sins upon himself, but *paid them* also; for we are told he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, 1 Pet. ii. 24. he was wounded for *our* transgressions, and bruised for *our* iniquities. Isai. liii. 5. In fact Jesus was mindful of us in his *life*, in which he wrought out a righteousness for us, he was mindful of us in his *death*, which he suffered to atone for our sins—he was mindful of us in his *resurrection* from the dead, in which he conquered death—he was mindful of us in his *ascension*, for he hath ascended up on high, he hath led captive, and received gifts for men, Psal. lxviii. and he is mindful of us even at this present moment, for the Apostle tells us, he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Heb. vii. 25.—And,

3. *Jehovah the Spirit*, likewise is equally mindful of us, which appears not only in *quickening* our souls, and *enlightening* our understandings, but also, in working *faith* in us, by which we are brought to a dependance on Christ alone, for life and salvation, and made *meet* to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. And as the Lord hath thus been mindful of us, so also the Spirit informs us, *secondly*,—*he will bless us*, that is, he will continue to bless us, in time to come.

1. He will bless us with *temporal blessings*, as before says our Lord, first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you; (Matt. vi. 33.) and we are informed also, that no good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly. Psal. lxxv. He will bless us also with *spiritual blessings*, such as a constant supply of *life* from himself; for as life is hid with Christ in God, (Col. iii. 3.) because Christ lives, we must live also, (John vi. 40.)

since he is the *vine* and we the *branches*; John xv. 5. he the *head* and we the *members*. Eph. i. 22.—But he will bless us likewise,

2. With more *light*. For the Lord God is a Sun (Psal. lxxxiv. 11.) to enlighten us, as well as a shield to defend us, and David conscious of the want of this blessing prays thus, open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Psal. cxix. 18.—The Lord also will bless us,

3. With more *wisdom*, therefore Job when addressing him, says, that which I see not, teach thou me. Job xxxiv. 32. And David cries, saying, teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. Psal. xxvii. 11.

4. The Lord will bless such also, with more *strength*, for they that wait upon me, (says God) shall renew their strength, Isai. xl. 31. and we are learned also, that he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength. Isai. xl. 29.

5. He will bless such with larger and clearer *mercies* of his love, and manifest himself to them as he does not unto the world. John xiv. 22. By which their affections will be attracted heaven-ward, and the love of Christ will constrain them to love him, and devote themselves unto him. And thus it is, that the Lord will bless us, how our enemies may strive to prevent it.—He will bless us,

6. At all *times* and in all *situations* of life,—he will bless us in a time of *sickness*, for David, when lying upon the bed of languishing, he will make all bed in his sickness. Psal. xli. 3.—Again, he will bless us at *death* also, with his *presence*, there-
fore

fore says David, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; Psal. xxiii. 4. and such shall be blessed with the enjoyment of God for ever, for whom I am, (says Christ) there also shall my servants be. John xii. 26.

SERMON XXI.

Isaiah lxvi. 2.

—But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

THIS chapter treats of the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, and of the regard had to them who did believe.—It speaks moreover of the conversion of that people in the latter day, of the calling in of the Gentiles, and of the happy state of the Church in the last times.—It informs us also of the unworthy notions that some of the Jews entertained of God, in supposing, that he was confined to the Temple of Jerusalem, and that none would be noticed by him, who worshipped any where else. To confute which notion, the Lord tells us in the words of my text—But to this man will I look, even to him who is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word; whether he be one that worships at the Temple of Jerusalem, or elsewhere; for says Christ, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.—In discoursing on the words of my text, let us attend to,

- I. The *Man* spoken of, and
- II. The *Premise* made to him.

First, as to the *Man* spoken of, he is described as one, that is *poor*—of a *contrite* spirit—and that *trembles* at God's word—to each of which let us attend separately.—He is described

I. As *poor*, but then, not every poor person in a literal sense is intended, but those poor of whom our Lord speaks, in Matthew v. 3. where he says, blessed are the poor *in spirit*. Mark, these *are* a blessed people, they *are* blessed already with *life* and *light* by which they see and feel their state by nature and practice; and though they have contracted a large debt with God, they now feel, like the two creditors of whom we read in the gospel, (Luke vii. 42.) they have nothing to pay it with, and are brought to cry, God be merciful to me a sinner; Luke xviii. 13. for if a good *thought*, *word*, or *work*, would procure Heaven for them, such is their abject state of poverty, that they of themselves could not produce either of them.

But he is further described—

2. As being of a *contrite*, broken, or sorrowful spirit; which happens in consequence of what he sees of his sinfulness and helplessness.—He laments with David, saying, mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me, Psal. xxxviii. 4. and under a sense of his own helplessness, he is brought to cry, in the language of the disciples of old, Lord save us: we perish; Matt. viii. 25. or, in the words of David, who said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee. Psal. xli. 4.—But this man is moreover described as one,

3. That *trembles* at God's word; which is not common with a sinner, under his first awaken-

ings, before he sees by faith his interest in Christ. Such an one trembles at the *requirements* of the law, which demands not only *perfect*, but likewise *perpetual* obedience.—He trembles at a sense of his utter *inability* to render that obedience; as he does also at the *curse*, which are pronounced in God's word, against the transgressors thereof; for it is written, *curled is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. and thus he will continue to tremble at God's word, till he has a view by faith, of God's pardoning love to his soul; or till he can say, with the holy Apostle, (Christ) *loved me, and gave himself for me*; Gal. ii. 20. at which time his trembling will be turned into rejoicing, and he will be able to say with David, *bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases*. Psal. ciii. 3.—But let us proceed,

II. To the *Promise* made to such, my text tells us, *to this man will I look*, which implies,

1. A *knowledge* of him, agreeable to which idea we are told, that the Lord knoweth them that are his; 2 Tim. ii. 19. that is, he hath a perfect knowledge of their *persons*, their *states*, their *animo*, and of every thing that relates to them. —It implies,

2. *Love* to this man, of which his being drawn of God is a fruit. Accordingly, it is said by the Prophet, the Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, *yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love*: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Jer. xxxi. 3. Mark, God does not first draw his people from the service of sin and Satan to himself, and then begins to love them; but he loves them

them *first*, and then draws them, as the above quoted text expresses it. But when the Lord says, to this man will I look; it implies,

3. *Care of him*, which he exercises towards this trembling sinner, not only every day, but also, every moment of his life; and he assures us, that the bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench; *Isai. xlii. 3.* and such is his care towards this *poor, contrite, trembling sinner*; that he watches over him continually; for we are told, that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him. *2 Chro. xvi. 9.*—But this promise implies,

4. *Faithfulness towards this man*, to confirm which idea, the words of the Apostle will serve, who tells us, God hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, (*Heb. xiii. 5.*) but will look to thee, and stand by thee in every time of need.

1. In time of *temptation*; accordingly we are assured, that when the enemy shall come in like flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. *Isai. lix. 19.*—But, to this man will I

2. In time of *persecution*, accordingly the Apostle assures us, we are persecuted but not forsaken, *2 Cor. xii. 10.* and the Lord declares, that no weapon formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt overcome. *Isai. liv. 17.*—I will look to him,

3. In seasons of *darkness*, and he shall find truth of the following words, that unto the night, there ariseth light in the darkness. *Psal. ciii. 11.*

4.—I will look to this poor, contrite, trembling sinner also,

4. In the *hour of death*, the belief of which (no doubt) caused David to say, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Psal. xxiii. 4.—I will look to him likewise,

5. In the *day of judgment*, and address him with, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. And thus the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit. Psal. xxxiv. 18.

SERMON XXII.

Matt. xxii. 29.

—*Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.*

THE occasion of these words being dropped, is as follows. Some of the Sadducees who said there was no resurrection, came to our Lord with, and proposed to him a question, taken from the writings of Moses; the sum and substance of which question was, that seeing seven brothers took successively one woman to wife; in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? Jesus answered and said to them, in the words of our text, ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God; for had they known the former, it must have appeared to them from many places in the old Testament, not only that the soul remains after death, but also, that the body will be raised from the dead.—And had they known the latter, that is, the power of God, they would have known

known, that he who made men out of the dust of the earth, was able also to raise them again, when tumbled into dust.—In discoursing on the words of my text, let us attend to them by way of observation.—And as to the charge contained in my text, it is not only applicable to the *Sadducees* with whom our Lord had at this time to do; but it may be applied also, to every other character, whose religious sentiments are contrary to God's word.—We may observe therefore,

1. There were some of whom we read in the word of God, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others; their language was, I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess, (Luke xviii. 9—12.) but then we are told, that these characters did all their works to be seen of men, Matt. xxiii. 5. and like those rebellious and God-provoking people mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah; said, stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou. Isai. lxv. 5. Now in these characters it may be said, *ye do err*, not knowing the scriptures, as do all those who trust in their own righteousness, despise the righteousness of Christ, and imagine themselves to be holier than their neighbours, though they have never been changed by the power of divine grace: But were these characters acquainted with the scriptures, they would know, that all by nature are upon a level, because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, (Rom. iii. 23.) and that all are deserving the everlasting wrath of God, on the account thereof. (Eph. ii. 3.)—And if they knew the scriptures, they would know likewise, that by the deeds of the law, no flesh can be justified in God's sight, (Rom. iii. 20.) and that there is no other name given among men whereby they must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ. Acts iv. 12.

But

But notwithstanding the good opinion which these characters entertained of themselves, our Lord told them, publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of Heaven before them. Matt. xxi. 31. But we may observe—

2. That there are some, who take upon themselves to deny the *divinity of Christ*, and who will insist upon it, that he is only a mere man. There were some such in the days of our Lord, who on his saying, *I and my Father are one*, took up stones to stone him, and accused him of blasphemy, saying unto him, thou being a man, makest thyself God. John x. 30,—33. But every such character may be addressed in the words of my text,—*ye know not*, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For surely were men acquainted with the scriptures, they would not deny so plain a fact; for the Prophet, when speaking of Christ, expressly declares him to be, the MIGHTY GOD, *Isai. ix. 6.* and this mighty God says, in Zechariah xii. 10. *I will pour upon the House of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications*, and that Christ is the person speaking, appears by the following words, where it is said, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced: Hence then we find, that it is the same person who was pierced by the Jews, (which was Christ) that pours out a spirit of *grace and supplications*, and as none but God can bestow such a blessing, this passage proves that Christ is GOD—accordingly Thomas calls him, my LORD and my GOD, John xx. 28. and the Apostle Paul declares him to be, over all, GOD blessed for ever. Rom. ix. 5. And he calls him in his Epistle to Titus, the GREAT GOD and (or even) our Saviour Jesus Christ. Tit. ii. 13. It was to this great God Jesus Christ, to whom the dying Thief prayed, *Luc. 23. 42.*

ing, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. Luke xxiii. 42.

I proceed now to observe—

3. That there are some we meet with, who contend strongly for *universal redemption*, and that every natural man, has a *free will* and power, to turn to God at any time, as they do also, that the Saints of God may *finally fall* and go to Hell, after all that Christ hath done *for* them, and the spirit hath wrought *in* them; but surely we may say to such, *ye do err*, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God: for were they acquainted with the scriptures, they would know that Christ laid down his life for his *sheep*, (John x. 14.) and not for the goats, and that it is the *Church of God*, which he hath purchased with his own blood; (Acts xx. 28.) even the general assembly, and Church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven. Heb. xii. 23. Again, if they knew the scriptures, they would know also, that man is an *helpless* creature, and that without Christ he can do nothing spiritually good. Accordingly Christ tells us, no man *can* come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, John vi. 44. and as men by nature are *unwilling* to come to Christ, as well as *unable*; it is God that worketh in the hearts of his people, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure. Phil. ii. 13.—But,

4. If these people knew the *scriptures* and the *power of God*, they would know also, that it would be utterly impossible for any of those to perish, who are redeemed by Christ, and regenerated by his spirit. For were it not so, how could Christ see off the travail of his soul and be satisfied, Isai. liii. 12. and what would become of the *justice of God*? if after Christ as a *surety* has paid his people's debts, they were arrested again for the same debts.

But

But again, what would become of the *family of God*, were any of his *sheep* to perish? for Christ hath expressly said, they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. John x. 28. besides the Apostle tells us, that that hath begun a good work in you, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ; and of this *nothing* Paul was *very confident*. Phil. i. 6. From hence we may learn, that whosoever profess to have a work begun in them, and it is not carried on and finished, it is not a *work of God*, but a work of man, which is sure to come to nought. Thus have I pointed out some of those errors, which men run into, for want of knowing the scriptures, and the power of God.

S E R M O N XXIII.

2 Cor. v. 14.

For the love of Christ constraineth us.—

IN the former part of this chapter, the Apostle expresses his confidence of his future happiness, and as an earnest thereof, God had given to him the spirit, as well as to the rest of his fellow-labourers, and of the Saints which were at Corinth. This made them *willing* rather, to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord—he then informs us, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, (both preachers and hearers) so that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether they be good or bad. Knowing therefore (said he) the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men, that is, that they are *lost, guilty, and helpless*, in a

themselves, and that there is salvation in Christ, the vilest of the vile, but in no other. And what led him and his fellow-labourers thus to act was, the most noble of all principles, LOVE; for thus my text, *the love of Christ constraineth us.*—In discoursing on these words, I shall endeavour to show,

- I. What we are to understand by the *Love of Christ*, and
- II. Take Notice of what is said thereof.

By the *Love of Christ*, we are sometimes to understand his love to his people, and at other times his love to him. The former of these, that is to say, Christ's love to his people is intended, where the Apostle says, the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Gal. ii. 20.—Now Christ's love to his people is manifested,

1. In his *suretyship engagements* with his Father, on the behalf of his people; accordingly Christ is spoken of by the Apostle, as a *surety* of a better covenant, (Heb. vii. 22.) which office capacity he took upon him, in the covenant of grace; when he said to his Father, lo, I come to do thy will, O Father. Heb. x. 7.—But, Christ's love to his people is seen moreover,

2. In his *incarnation*, or appearing in this world in our nature; for we are told, he took not on the nature of Angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham, Heb. ii. 16. and that too, with a view to the salvation of his people *only*, who were in the same lost, helpless state and condition as others; therefore it is said, by this Apostle, that Christ came into the world to save *sinners*, of whom I am chief. 1 Tim. i. 15. Mark then, ye
I distressed

distressed and heavy laden sinners, there is mercy in Christ for the *chief* of sinners ; for such character you see, Christ came into the world to save, *chiefly* with a *present*, as well as with an *everlasting* salvation.—But the love of Christ appears also towards his people,

3. In his *life*, which was spent in working out righteousness for them, according to the requirements of God's law, which demands *perfect* and *perpetual* obedience. Accordingly we are told by the Apostle, that Christ is (or went to) the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, (Rom. x. 4,) and all those who are loved by the Father, and redeemed by Christ, shall (in the day of God's power) be brought to believe in him to the saving of their souls. Heb. x. 39.—Again Christ's love to his people is manifested likewise,

4. In his *dying* for them ; for we are informed, that Christ gave his life a ransom for *many*, (Mat. xx. 28.) and who these many are, he himself tells us, where he says, I lay down my life for my *sheep*. John x. 15. Accordingly when the Apostle was addressing the overseers of the Church, in the Acts of the Apostles, he charged them to feed the *Church of God*, which he hath *purchased* with his own blood ; Acts xx. 28. and till it can be made appear, that the words *many*, *sheep*, and *church* are *general terms*, and applicable to every individual, it can never be made appear, that *general redemption* has any existence in the word of God.—But Christ's love to his people appears also,

5. In his *intercession* for them, for we are told by the Apostle, that he ever liveth to make intercession for them ; Heb. vii. 25. on whose behalf he is always heard, and therefore when addressing his Father, he said, I knew that thou hearest me.

ways. John xi. 42. But to proceed—At other times by the *love of Christ*, we are to understand his *people's love* to him; this seems to be intended in that question, which is asked in the song of Solomon, where it is said, who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? Song, viii. 5. and again, I am my beloved's, (said the Church) and his desire is towards me, (Song vii. 10.) both which passages, undoubtedly set forth the *Church's love to Christ*. But if these be not sufficient, let us hear what the Apostle Paul says on this subject. In his Epistle to the Romans, are found these remarkable words; that is to say, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, Rom. v. 5. agreeable to which passage, we are told by the same Apostle, that the fruit of the spirit is LOVE, &c. Gal. v. 22. Now this love, which is the *fruit*, or *production* of the spirit of God in the hearts of his regenerate ones, is that which leads the possessors thereof, to glorify God in what they do and say.—But this brings me,

II. To take Notice of what is said thereof; the Apostle says, the love of Christ constraineth us.—It constrains us,

1. To love God, who has made such ample provision for our present, as well as for our everlasting happiness. This therefore is the express declaration of the Apostle John, namely, we love him because he first loved us; (1 John iv. 19.) from which passage, we may learn, that all God's regenerate people love him, the cause of which is, he first loved them, and had not that been the case, they would have lived under the influence of a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, they would have died in that condition, and have been

banished from God for ever.—But the love of Christ constrains us,

2. To *love his people*, for if a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen? from whence we may conclude, that he who loveth God, loveth his brother also. 1 John iv. 20, 21.—Again, the love of Christ constrains us likewise,

3. To *love the word of God*, accordingly David when describing the good man, says, his delight is in the law (or word) of the Lord, and in it doth he meditate day and night, (Psal. i. 2.) and in another place he says, how sweet are thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Psal. cxiii. 103.

4. The *love of Christ* constrains us to *love the service of God*; this made David say, my soul thirsteth for God: when shall I come and appear before him. Psal. xlii. 2. David well knew (no doubt) that in all places where he recorded his name, he would come unto them and bless them, (Exod. xx. 24.) this made him say, my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. Psal. lxxxiv. 2.—And,

5. It constrains us to *promote his cause and interest* in the world, by endeavouring to diffuse among those around us, the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ, by setting forth the glory of his righteousness, the completeness of his atonement, and the fulness of grace which is in him; together with his *willingness and ability* to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, to all which it may be said, the love of Christ constraineth us.

SERMON XXIV.

1 Cor. iv. 7.

For who maketh thee to differ from another?—

IN the former part of this chapter the Apostle shews, that the ministers of Christ ought to be esteemed as stewards of the mysteries of God, of whom faithfulness is required.—He informs these Corinthians also, (some of whom were of a censorious spirit) that it was a small thing with him that he should be judged of man's judgment; knowing that the Lord would judge him at the last, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart. And what he had said to these Corinthians before was, that they might not think of men, above that which is written of them, and that no one might be puffed up against another; for, said he, in the words of my text, *who maketh thee to differ from another?—*In speaking on these words, I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. That all *Men* by *Nature* are *alike*;
- II. Point out the *Difference* between a converted, and an unconverted *Man*, and
- III. Answer the *Question* proposed, by shewing *who* makes this *Difference*.

I am to shew first, that all Men by Nature are alike, which appears abundantly clear from the word of God,—wherein we are informed,

1. That *all* have *sinned* and come short of the glory of God. Rom. iii. 23. This passage includes

cludes both *high* and *low*, *rich* and *poor*, *Jew* and *Gentile* one with another, and is applicable to every one, who ever did, or shall spring from the loins of *Adam* by ordinary generation, by which *one offence* it is, that judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Rom. v. 18.—Therefore it is,

2. That all men by nature are *unrighteous*, for it is written, there is none righteous (that is by nature) no not one. Rom. iii. 10. For men have lost their original righteousness by sinning against God, and are totally unable to work one out according to the requirements of the law of God.—But Men by nature are all alike,

3. Under the *curse of the law*, as considered in Adam, for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in *all things* written in the book of the law to do them : Gal. iii. 10. And as none of the descendants of Adam, have continued to do all things written in the book of the law ; all of them, as considered in connexion with him, must be under the curse of that law, of which they are transgressors.—Therefore it is,

4. That all men by nature are alike *deserving* of the *wrath of God*, accordingly the Apostle told the Ephesians, that they were by nature children of wrath, even as others ; Eph. ii. 3. that is, they were equally as deserving of God's wrath, as others were, who like themselves had transgressed God's law.—But,

5. Men by nature are all alike in a *helpless* state and condition. This appears plain enough I think, from what our Lord said to the Jews, when he told them, that no man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me, draw him ; John 6. 44. which plainly shews, that all men are *helpless*. Agreeable to which idea, the Lord says

Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help. Hof. xiii. 9. The Church therefore being sensible of this truth, says, draw me and we will run after thee. Song i. 4.—We proceed,

II. To point out the *Difference* between a converted and an unconverted Man.—And,

1. The *unconverted man* is dead in trespasses and sins, but the *converted man* is a *quickened man*. Accordingly the Apostle when writing to the Ephesians, says, you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1.——Mark his words, these Ephesians did not quicken themselves, nor did the Apostles and ministers of Christ quicken them; but it was HE, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, mentioned in the 17th verse of the first chapter of this Epistle to the Ephesians; HE did the work, HE therefore ought to have the glory of it.—Again, there is a difference also,

2. As to their *principle of action*, the one acts from a *bad principle*, that is, a principle of corrupt nature; and the other from a *good principle*, or a principle of grace in the heart; and as our Lord says, the *evil man* out of the *evil* treasure of his heart, bringeth forth *evil things*; but the *good man*, out of the *good* treasure of his heart, bringeth forth *good things*. Matt. xii. 35.—Hence it appears,

3. There is a difference also, as to their *practice*: the *unconverted man* is in a state of rebellion against God, he loves sin, and therefore is in it; but the *converted man* is obedient to God, he hates sin, and therefore turns from it; and Enoch of old has at times this testimony, that he pleases God. Heb. xi. 5. In short, the former loves after the flesh, and minds the things of the flesh;

flesh; but the latter is living after the spirit, and minds the things of the spirit.—Rom. viii. 5.—

4. There is a difference likewise in their *language*, for the unconverted are speaking against God, their words are stout against him, (Mal. iii. 13.) but those who are converted, are speaking *to* and *for* God, and *declaring* to others what he has done in their souls. Psal. lxvi. 16.—We come,

III. To answer the *Question* proposed, by shewing *who* makes this *Difference*.—And,

Here let it be remembered, that no man can make himself to differ, for can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots?—nor may ye also do good, who are accustomed to do evil; Jer. xiii. 23. which words are dropped to shew, that it is utterly impossible for any *natural* man whatsoever, to do good (spiritually) of himself without the spirit of God.—But

1. The Prophet Isaiah answers this question very pertinently, where he says, Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for *thou* also hast wrought all our works in us. Isai. xxvi. 12. Mark, brethren, the Prophet does not say, that the Lord hath wrought some of our works, and we have wrought the others; but he ascribes all the good, which was wrought *in* them to God, and to him only.—But again we may observe,

2. That Paul answers this question equally pertinently as the Prophet, where he says, by the *grace of God, I am what I am*; 1 Cor. xv. 10. this was true of the Apostle observe, not only as a *minister of Christ*, but also as a *christian*, and that is true not only of Paul as a christian, but of every christian under Heaven, all of whom are constrained

of to say with the Apostle, by the grace of God, I am what I am.—But,

3. This question is answered moreover by this same Apostle, when writing to the Philippians, where he says, *it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure.* Phil. ii. 13. Hence we may learn, that men have neither *will*, nor *power* to do any thing truly and spiritually good, till God works in them both the one and the other, which he does of his *own good pleasure.* From which considerations it appears, that when a christian is asked as in the words of my text, who maketh thee to differ from another? either as to his *gifts* or *graces*, his answer is, *not myself, but the Lord only*, on which account boasting is entirely excluded, and all the glory is due to God *only*; and by the christian, is given to him.

SERMON XXV.

Isaiah xxxv. 10.

The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

THIS chapter presents to our view a prediction of the flourishing state of the Gospel Church, of the blessings received by it from Jesus Christ. God's ministers are directed to encourage the flock and to assure them, that their God will come and save them with a *present* as well as an *everlasting* salvation. For the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and

and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.—In which words we have things, present themselves for our consideration that is to say,

- I. The *Persons* spoken of, and
- II. Their *Privileges* set forth.

First, as to the *Persons* spoken of, they are the *ransomed of the Lord*, the same persons who are called in the 9th verse of this chapter the *redeemed*. This implies,

1. That they were in bondage, which is the case with all God's people, as well as others, as considered in connexion with Adam, (their first head) in whom they are in bondage to *sin* and the curse of the law, and are deserving of the wrath of God, even as others. Eph. ii. 3. They therefore stood in need of being ransomed or redeemed, which they are,

1. From *sin*, for the Apostle tells us, that Christ gave himself for us, that he might *redeem* us from *all iniquity*. Tit. ii. 14. Mark the expression, brethren, *all iniquity*, that is, all the original and all the actual iniquity of all his people, that ever did, do now, or ever shall exist in this world.—And as they are delivered from sin, so they are also,

2. From the *curse of a broken law*; and the Apostle plainly makes this appear, where he says CHRIST hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Gal. iii. 13. The law pronounces every transgressor *accursed*, but Christ as his people's *surety* was made a curse for them, and they thereby are delivered.—But,

3. Ever

3. Every transgressor of God's law, is deserving of God's wrath, and they must have had it, but a deliverer was found; hence we are informed, that even Jesus hath delivered us from wrath to come; (1 Thes. i. x) that is, from all that wrath which was due to his people, he having drunk the very dregs of that cup; insomuch, that God declares for the comfort of all his people, *fury is not in me*, Isai. xlviii. 4. justice is satisfied and God's people are liberated, for we are told, he gave his life a ransom for them. Matt. xx. 28. Thus we find that God's people are *ransomed* or redeemed, and that *of* (or *by*) the Lord Jesus Christ; who redeemed them, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with his own most precious blood. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. We are come,

II. To consider their *Privileges*. That which presents itself to us—

First, is the *effectual calling* of these redeemed ones, couched in these words, *they shall return*; that is, in spite of all opposition from their various enemies, which militate against it.—This implies,

1. That they by nature are in a state of *alienation* from God, which may be proved from the Prophet's words, where he says, all we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, (Isai. liii. 6.) which is a very sinful way, as well as a *God-dishonouring* and *soul-dishonouring* way.—And as like sheep we have gone away, so also,

2. Like sheep we have naturally no *inclination* to return to Christ the shepherd, till he first seeks us; hence we are told, Christ came to *seek* and *save*, that which was lost. Luke xix. 10. He informs us, that no man can come unto HIM, except

except the Father draw him ; (John vi. 44.) under whose influence they *shall return*, for says God I will make them a *willing* people, in the use of my power, (Psal. cx. 3.: I will make them willing, to forsake sin and their own righteousness, and to return to me for the enjoyment of

A full and free pardon,
A justifying righteousness,
For peace of conscience,
For supplies of grace,
And for eternal life.

Secondly, we are told, that such as are *redeemed by Christ*, and under the influence of God's Spirit return to him, *shall come to Zion*.—Now Zion is emblematical of the Church of God, as appears Isaiah i. 27. where we are told Zion shall be *redeemed* with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. We may observe here, that all those who are regenerated, having turned their backs on the world and the men of it ; they are asking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward. Jer. l. 5.—They shall therefore come to,

1. *Zion below*, or to the Church militant, being desirous of associating with the people of God, and of casting in their lot among them. They shall come there

To hear the Gospel preached,
To partake of its ordinances,
To enjoy communion with the Saints, and
To be benefited by their instruction.

But they shall come also,

2. *To Zion above*, or to the Church triumphant, which clearly and strongly establishes that supporting and God-honouring doctrine of the *final perseverance* of the Saints ; for as God says they *shall come to Zion*, it is impossible they should be prevented, for were it not so, they must perish.

but our Lord tells us, that his sheep shall never perish, for he gives unto them eternal life, John x. 28.) therefore we are told by an Apostle, whom he calls—them he also *glorifies*. Rom. viii. 30.—
But,

Thirdly, my text informs us also, of the *manner* of their coming, that is to say, with *songs* and *everlasting joy* upon their heads, they will sing praises.

To the *Father*, for loving, chusing and blessing them,

To the *Son*, for redeeming them, and

To the *Spirit*, for sanctifying, or making them meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light.

Their joy also shall be *everlasting* as to the *matter* of it, though here it may sometimes be interrupted for a season, as to the *exercise* of it.—And the text tells us moreover,

Fourthly, they shall obtain *joy* and *gladness*, that is, uninterrupted joy and gladness and a greater degree thereof, when they join the Church triumphant in glory. And there says my text, *sorrow* and *fighting* shall flee away, because sin which is the cause of both, shall be for ever done away.

So that we may learn from the whole,

First, that all the redeemed, or ransomed of the Lord shall be called and return to him under the influence of his blessed Spirit—

Secondly, That all those who return as above directed, shall most assuredly persevere in grace, to the end of their lives—And

Thirdly, That they shall be brought triumphantly to the realms of bliss.

SERMON XXVI.

1 Chron. iv. 10.

And Jabez called on the God of Israel.

IN the verse before our text we are informed, that this Jabez was more honourable than his brethren, and the reason why he was called Jabez, because his mother bare him with sorrow.—Some have thought that he was more honourable than his brethren, on account of his riches, strength, and courage; but others think, it was on the account of his religion and piety, because it is said in the words of my text, Jabez called on the God of Israel.—In discoursing on which words, we may observe,

- I. *That Jabez called,*
- II. *For What he called, and*
- III. *The Success he met with.*

First, we are to observe that Jabez called on the God of Israel, as have all pious people in every age of the world. And whereas the name Jabez signifies *sorrowful*, it may serve to remind us, that in all times of trouble and sorrow from any cause whatsoever, *Jabez's God* is to be called on for succour and relief.—We may observe

- I. That Jabez did not call on the God of Israel *profanely*, as the wicked do, who are daily blaspheming the name of God, even in their common conversation; insomuch, that it may be said, as was in the Prophet Jeremiah's time, because of swearing (or cursing) the land mourneth,

xviii. 10.) no, for as a man born of God, or a pious man, he *hated* it, and *abstained* from it.—Nor

2. Did *Jabez* call on God in a *formal* manner only, as do too many in this our day, who have a form of 'godliness, but deny the power thereof, (2 Tim. iii. 5.) this was the conduct of that Pharisee, of whom we read in the gospel, and of whom it is said, he went up to the Temple to pray. Luke xviii. 10.—But,

3. *Jabez* called on the God of Israel *feelingly*, as does every one who is quickened by the spirit of God, and is thereby brought to see his *state*—to feel his *guilt* and his *utter inability* to help himself; such a character is brought to know, that none but the God of Israel, who is a God of *love, wisdom, power and faithfulness*, can help or deliver him.—Therefore,

4. He will call on the God of Israel *frequently and fervently*, this doubtless was the practice of *Jabez*, as it was also of David, who says, at *evening and morning*, and at *noon* will I pray and cry aloud, (Ps. lv. 17.) which is expressive also of his *intimacy* with the Lord, for the supply of all his wants.

5. *Jabez* called on the God of Israel, not only as a God of *nature*, or as a God of *providence*, but as a God of *grace* in Jesus Christ.—We proceed,

II. To take notice of *What* it was that he called for.—And,

1. We are told, that his language was, Oh ! that I wouldst *bless me indeed*, that is in reality and truth, which words are expressive of the real desires of a longing and thirsty soul, who is panting after God. This part of his petition includes

no doubt; not only *temporal blessings*, without which he could not be comfortable; but *spiritual blessings* also, the enjoyment of which makes the heart of God's regenerate ones happy; since they are *substantial, durable and irreversible*.—But,

2. Another thing for which he called, is contained in these words—*and enlarge my coast*—which not only designs an enlargement of the borders of his country, but also a spiritual enlargement, or growth in grace. He prayed no doubt, as does every real christian, for an *enlarged heart*; not only in *light and in love*, but also in *liberty*; for he that enjoys most of these, wishes and still prays for the enjoyment of more.—But another thing for which *Jabez* called on the God of Israel, was,

3. *That his hand might be with him*, not only to guide him in the way he should go, but to guard him also from those enemies, which might attempt to hinder him from walking in that way—or in this sense may be, let thine hand of *providence* be with me to protect me—thine hand of *grace* and love to comfort me—and thine hand of *wisdom* to direct me.—But,

4. He prayed also, that *God would keep him from evil*, that is, from being influenced by the *smiles or frowns* of an *evil world*; that he might be kept *steadfast and unmoveable*, amidst the assaults from an *evil Devil*; as well as from the prevalence of the corruptions of an *evil heart*—and in short, that he might be kept from the evil of all evils, *so that it might not grieve him*, which it is sure to do to all God's regenerate people, when they are hurried into it. And from hence we may learn, that *Jabez* was a renewed man, or else sin would have been a grief to him.—This brings me to observe,

III. The *Success* he met with, which is contained

ed in these words, namely—the Lord granted him that which he requested, that is,

1. He was *blessed indeed*, according to the request of his lips, which sprang no doubt from the desires of his heart, renewed by the power of divine grace. And—

2. His *coast*, or his *heart* was enlarged, by which he had more exalted views of God's love and favour towards him; as well as clearer views of the work of grace within him. Again—

3. The *hand of God was with him*, that is, his hand of *providence* to protect him—his hand of *grace* and *love* to comfort him—and his hand of *wisdom* to direct him.—He was moreover,

4. *Kept from evil*, that is, from the evil that was in the world—he was kept from falling by the temptations of an *evil Devil*, as well as from grief or distress arising from giving way to the worst of all evils, namely, *SIN*—by which we see the following promise fulfilled, the desire of the righteous shall be granted, (Prov. x. 24.) that is so far as it is agreeable to the mind and will of God, and for that real good.—From what has been said on this subject, we may learn

First, it is the employment of every gracious person, like *Jabez* of old, to call on the God of Israel, both for temporal and spiritual blessings, being he is a God of providence, as well as a God of grace in Christ.

Secondly, that there is the greatest encouragement so to do, by God's conduct towards *Jabez*—we are told, that God granted him that which he requested: therefore the success met with by *Jabez*, ought to induce others who have a feeling of their wants, to cry unto the Lord for a

Supply thereof, remembering that he hath said, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. Mat. vii. 7.

SERMON XXVII.

Acts vii. 51.

Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

THESE words are frequently produced by some writers and preachers, with a design to prove that the Holy Spirit does not work irresistibly in man, but that he may be *resisted* by man, even when he works with a design to convert them. But this surely cannot be true, since God says, *will work, and who shall let it?* Isa. xlii. 13. Besides, he tells us moreover, that his counsel shall stand, and that *he will do all his pleasure*; (Isa. xlii. 10.) but how God can be said to *do all his pleasure*, if it be his *will and pleasure* to convert some who are not converted, is not easy to tell. However, I presume, upon examination we shall find, that no such doctrine as the above-mentioned is contained in my text. And in order to investigate the meaning of it, two things are necessary to be attended to, which are,

- I. The *Characters* addressed, and
- II. The *Charge* brought against them.

First, let us attend to the *Characters* who are addressed in my text, and these the words which precede my text inform us are, the *first-named*

uncircumcised in heart and ear. Which description of them plainly indicates, that they were not *gracious*, but *graceless* people.—For,

1. They were *stiff-necked*, that is, they were not at this time, brought to bow to the sceptre of King Jesus, nor had they learned of him, who was meek and lowly in heart, to take his yoke upon them, (Matt. xi. 29.) and consequently had found no rest for their souls; but they were like *Bullocks* unaccustomed to the yoke, Jer. xxxi. 18. and kicked not only at the *chastisements* of God, but also at the truths of the everlasting Gospel, as well as at those, who were the publishers thereof; for we are informed, *they stoned Stephen* to death, (verse 59.) and thereby displayed that enmity which was in their hearts, against Christ and his ministers, which proved,

2. That they were *uncircumcised* both in *heart* and in *ear*—now to be *uncircumcised* is to be *unregenerated*, or in a state of nature; and this appears plainly, I think, from what is recorded in Col. ii. 11. where the Apostle says, in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands; by which the Apostle certainly means no other than the work of *regeneration*, in the hearts of God's *called ones*, seeing it was a circumcision, which was accompanied with *putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*.

3. Now, seeing these *stiff-necked* and *uncircumcised* in heart and ear, were no other than *unregenerate* people, they must of course be destitute not only of the work of grace in their hearts, but also of that spirit who performs it; for when the apostle Jude describes a carnal man, he does it in these words, *sensual having not the spirit*. But it is possible for men to resist the operations

of the Holy Ghost in them, who never took possession of them; and how it is possible for them to bring to naught a work which was never begun in them, I must leave to the assertors of these *infirmities* to shew; for I freely confess that I cannot see, how any man can resist the *Spirit's* work in him, who is destitute of the spirit, and consequently of that work, which is said to be wrought by him; as we are sure is the case of every *uncircumcised*, or *unregenerate* person upon the earth.—But,

4. As their *hearts* were uncircumcised or unregenerated, so also were their *ears*; inasmuch, that they could not bear to hear the truths of the gospel insisted upon by those, whom God had appointed to preach them; therefore we are told, that these stiff-necked and uncircumcised people *stopped their ears* and ran upon Stephen with one accord, as may be seen in the 57th verse of the chapter, out of which my text is taken.—But let us proceed,

II. To the *Charge* brought against them.—Namely, *ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye.* Under which head of discourse, it will be necessary for me to shew, in what sense the Holy Ghost *can be resisted*, and in what sense he *cannot be resisted*; as well as in what sense it was, that these stiff-necked and uncircumcised people did *resist him*.

I. That the spirit of God in his *gracious operations* upon the heart may be resisted, or opposed, will be readily granted, I think, by every one who is acquainted with himself and the nature of sin, that being ever contrary to a pure and holy God. Accordingly we find, the Apostle Paul address the Ephesians thus, *grieve not the holy Spirit of God* Eph. iv. 30. which is done, (speaking in the manner of men) when sin is yielded to, or when

corrupt nature gains the advantage of the christian, to the *dishonour* of God, to the *disgrace* of religion, and to the *distress* and *disquietude* of his own soul.— And thus it was, that both *David* and *Peter* resisted the *Holy Ghost*, in his operations on their souls, by their respective sins which they committed, and on which account, the *Holy Ghost* withdrew his *comforting presence* from them; for the one *went out and wept bitterly*, (Matt. xxvi. 75.) and the other was left for a time to cry, *restore unto me, O Lord, the joy of thy salvation*: Psal. li. 12.— But then it should be remembered,

2. That the *Holy Ghost* cannot be so resisted, as to be overcome, or obliged to cease from the work of regeneration or conversion, where he operates that purpose; for in that sense it may be asked, how hath he resisted his will? Rom. ix. 19. and God hath said, *I will work and who shall let it?* (Isai. 43. 13.) besides, Christ says to his Disciples, *I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you FOR EVER—* he dwelleth with you, and *shall be in you*. John 16, 17. From which passages of scripture it clearly appears, that the *Holy Ghost* never leaves the heart, of which he once takes possession; notwithstanding all the *resistance* with which he meets; before it is, as the Apostle Peter expresses we are kept by the mighty power of God, through faith (not unto damnation observe, but) unto salvation. 1 Pet. i. 5. Accordingly the Lord says by the Prophet, *I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good*: Blessed promise, may God give us the comfort thereof.—But perhaps some of God's *regenerated ones* may be saying, I am afraid that I shall sometime or other depart from the Lord; no, says God, I will put my fear in their

their hearts, that they shall not depart from Jer. xxxii. 40. Well therefore might Paul say he that hath begun a good work in you, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. i. 6. But,

3. Let us examine for the sense in which the *stiff-necked* and *uncircumcised*, or *unregenerate* people resisted the Holy Ghost—and here let it be remembered, they did not resist his operations in the hearts, seeing he had not taken possession of them; for had that been the case, they would have been *regenerated*, and brought to *submit* to the yoke of Christ: But they resisted the Holy Ghost in the *Prophets*, and in the rest of the ministers of God's word. Agreeable to what the Prophet (when speaking of a rebellious people) tells the Lord *many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in THY PROPHETS*; Nehem. ix. 30. mark, it is not said by thy spirit in the hearts, but *in thy Prophets*. That this is the meaning of my text under consideration, appears plainly in the following words thereto, where it is asked which of the Prophets have not your fathers persecuted? or opposed and resisted—and when they resisted the Prophets, they resisted the Holy Ghost *in them*, as they did also, when they resisted the *Prophets*, or any other minister of Christ; under whose influence they acted and spoke to the glory of God, and to the comfort of his people. Therefore, although the Holy Ghost hath been resisted in the *Prophets*, and in the ministers of Christ, when he works in the hearts of the rebellious ones, with a design to convert them, he cannot be so resisted as to cause him to cease working.

SERMON XXVIII.

Rom. vi. 14.

For sin shall not have dominion over you : for ye are not under the law but under grace.

THE Apostle having in the preceding chapter finished his design, in proving that the matter of a sinner's *justification* in the sight of God, is the active and passive obedience of Christ *only*; herein this chapter endeavours to refute the charge brought against it as a licentious doctrine, and endeavours to prevent any ill use which might be made of it, pressing these Romans at the same time by the strongest arguments, to holiness of life and conversation, as the most likely means to stop the mouths of gainsayers, and to refute the charge that evil-minded men might bring against the above-mentioned doctrine of *justification* by Christ's righteousness *only*; and for their encouragement in this matter the Apostle ushers in the words of my text, saying, *sin shall not have dominion over you ; for ye are not under the law but under grace.*—In discoursing on which words, it appears necessary to take notice,

- I. Of the *Characters* addressed,
- II. Of the Import of the *Promise* made to them, and
- III. Of the *Reason* assigned for it.

First, with regard to the Persons addressed we are to observe, that *not all* the Romans are intended, but only that *part* of them, who were in Church—

Church-fellowship at Rome; seeing that all the Epistles are only so many letters addressed to different Churches, to which they are sent. The characters are particularly described in the reverse of the first chapter of this Epistle; in which verse, we find the Apostle directs his Epistle to all that be at Rome *beloved of God; called to Saints*.

1. They were *beloved of God*, as all his people are. This love was sovereignly fixed upon the persons, even before the foundation of the world, and be it remembered my fellow-sinners, that God did not love his people for any thing that was *amiable* in them, for by nature they are *filthy* and *stiff-necked*, as any people under Heaven; but he loved them because he would love them. But then be it remembered also, that though he loved their persons, he *hated* their sins, which is manifest by punishing the Son of his love, (Jesus Christ) when he was charged with them. This love remember, is from everlasting to everlasting. Jer. xxxi. 3.—But these Romans addressed in the text, were in consequence of God's love to them.

2. *Called to be Saints*, from whence we may learn, that these were sinners by nature and practice, as all other people are, and we may observe moreover, that God never had any but sinners to make Saints of. These people were called for the purpose, not only *externally* in the ministry of the word, but *internally* also by the spirit of God, whose work is to sanctify the souls of all the *beloved* and *redeemed* ones, and make them meet for communion with God *here*, and the enjoyment of God *hereafter*. Agreeable to which are the words of the Apostle, where he says, (when speaking of God) who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. Col. i. 12.

Now these *beloved* ones, these *called* ones, or these *Saints*, are the characters addressed in the words of my text, and none else.—We come now therefore to take notice,

II. Of the Import of the *Promise* made to them. And here let it be observed,

1. That the Apostle does not say, sin shall not have a *being* in you, no, for that would have contradicted not only plain scripture, but his own experience, as well as that of every other christian upon the earth. John tells us in plain words, that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; (1 John i. 8.) and the wise man tells us, there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and *sinneeth not*: Eccl. vii.

This the Apostle Paul experienced and groaned under, saying, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom.

24. And this I believe is the experience also of every real *converted* person under Heaven; and before such will always (while here) have to say as Christ taught his Disciples, saying, forgive our debts. Matt. vi. 12.

But the text does assure us, that sin shall not have dominion over the Saints; mark, it does not say, that a real Saint of God cannot commit *acts* of sin, for in many things we all offend, (James iii.) but says the Apostle, sin shall not have *dominion* over you; that is, it shall not tyrannise, or reign over you, as it did in days which are past; whence we may see, that in every converted person, though sin is *not destroyed*, yet sin is *subdued*; which enables the Saints to yield themselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and to use their members as instruments of righteousness unto God; and whenever through the corruptions of

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nature,

nature, or the temptations of Satan, the Saints of God are prevented from thus *living to him*, to their greatest grief and burden, and they are constrained to lament with the Apostle Paul, *for the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that do I.* Rom. vii. 19. Notwithstanding which, sin shall not have such dominion over the Saints of God, as to bring them into bondage to the curse of a broken law, Christ having fulfilled it for them.

This leads me to take notice,

III. Of the *Reason* assigned, why sin has no dominion over the Saints. It is contained in the words, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.—We are told,

1. They were not under the law. Now in this expression, we are not to suppose, that the regenerated man is under no obligation to observe the precepts of the moral law in his life and conversation; because that would contradict our Lord's direction, given to his *own Disciples* in Matthew's Gospel; for when speaking to them of the Scribes and Pharisees who sit in Moses's seat, he said unto them, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do. Matt. xxiii. 2. 3.—But,

2. By not being under the law, we are to understand, that they were not under the *curse* of the law, as the Apostle explains it in another place, when he says, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; Gal. iii. 13. in consequence of which these Romans were made

3. Partakers of the grace of God in their hearts, which became the *ruling* or *governing* principle whereby they were brought to love God, and to his glory; or to deny ungodliness and

and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Therefore, although the believer has sin in him, it has not dominion over him; because the grace of God reigns and rules in his heart, and subdues it to the glory of God, and the comfort of his soul.

SERMON XXIX.

I Cor. ii. 14.

The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

HIS chapter gives us an account of Paul's manner of preaching, that it was not with excellency of speech, or of natural wisdom; but in the simplest manner, he made known among these Corinthians, Jesus Christ and him crucified; notwithstanding which, such is the state of man by nature, that none can experimentally, or savingly know the things of God, but by the spirit of God; for the Apostle, the *natural man* receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Discourfing on which words let us attend

- I. To the *Man*, and
- II. To *What* is faid of him.

As to the man, he is called in my text, a *natural man*, that is, an unregenerate man, a man

who is altogether under the influence of a corrupt nature. He is described in God's word,

1. To be a man who is *without Christ*. Therefore says the Apostle, when writing to the Ephesians, at that time (at the time when they were in a state of nature) ye were without Christ; that is, without an experimental knowledge and enjoyment of him; (which is the case of every natural man, as well as of these Ephesians) having no hope, and without God in the world, (Eph. ii. 12.) that is, they had no well-grounded hope; but were without an experimental knowledge of, and acquaintance with God, as a God of grace in Jesus Christ, as all natural men are. And they are described also,

2. As men who are *without the Spirit*. The description therefore which Jude gives of every natural man is, he is sensual, having not the Spirit. Jude 19th verse. And as natural men have not the Spirit to teach and guide them, it is no wonder that they remain ignorant of the things of God; for no man knoweth the things of God, but by the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. ii. 11. Again, every natural man is,

3. Without the *life of God* in his soul—Accordingly, the Apostle when writing to the Ephesians told them, that though God had then quickened them, they were *formerly* dead in trespasses and sins, (Eph. ii. 1.) that is, they were dead to God, and every thing that is spiritually good, as every natural man is, who has no more power to perform a *spiritually* good act, than a dead body has to perform the common functions of life. We may observe moreover,

4. That a natural man is one in whom *there is no good thing*, this is acknowledged by the Apostle Paul.

Paul, who expressly declares, saying, I know that in me, that is in my flesh, (or corrupt nature) dwells no good thing; Rom. vii. 18. for a natural man is

Without hope, Eph. ii. 12.

Without the fear of God, Rom. iii. 18.

Without the love of God, John v. 42.

Without faith in Christ, 2 Thes. iii. 2.

and therefore cannot please God. Heb. xi. 6.

Well then might the Apostle say, that they who are in the flesh, (or wholly under the influence of a corrupt nature) cannot please God, Rom. viii. 8. that is, they cannot do any thing to recommend themselves to the notice and favour of God; for they being dead in trespasses and sins, all the works they do may be denominated dead works, the doing of which cannot please God, or procure his favour to them. Thus much respecting the natural man.—Proceed we now

II. To *What* is said of him; we are informed,

First, he receives not the things of the Spirit of God—now by the things of the Spirit of God, we are to understand the truths of God's word, which the Apostle had been preaching with all plainness among them, as well as among others. One of which truths was,

1. *Man's sinfulness*—this is one thing which is revealed in the word of God; and that by the Spirit of God, and which also the Apostle taught, as appears from these words, where he says, there is none righteous, no not one—there is none that doeth good, no not one. Rom. iii. 10—12. But although this is a thing so clearly revealed by the Spirit in the word of God, the natural man will not receive, or embrace it; but vainly imagines, that his state is not so bad as it really is.—

Another thing of, and which is revealed by the Spirit of God, is

2. *Man's helplessness*—which is clearly pointed out in these words, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help; (Hosea xiii. 4.) intimating no doubt, that they were altogether helpless in and of themselves. This is a doctrine which Christ himself taught his own disciples, when he said to them, without me ye can do nothing (John xv. 5.) that is, nothing which is truly and spiritually good; and if without Christ his Disciples could do nothing, there is much less probability of those doing any thing good, who have no good in them, but are dead in trespasses and sins.—This also is a doctrine which the natural man receives not.—But

3. The *recovery* by Christ is another thing revealed in the word of God by his Spirit. For that the righteousness of Christ being imputed to us, makes us righteous before God, is a doctrine that was strongly insisted on by the Apostle himself; therefore said he, blessed is the man unto whom God *imputeth* righteousness, Rom. iv. 6. but that the natural man does not receive this thing, though it is so clearly revealed in the word of God, not more than he does.

4. The *doctrine of the atonement*, which is another thing as clearly revealed by the Spirit of God, as any of the former.—For we are told, the Father laid upon Christ the iniquity of all the Church and people, (Isai. liii. 6.) and the Apostle says, he bore our sins in his own body on the tree (1 Pet. ii. 24.) that is, he bore the *charge*, and *punishment* due to them, so that he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. Isai. liii. 5. But even this doctrine, though

clearly revealed, is a thing which the natural man receives not.—And

2. The *work of the Spirit* is another thing that is revealed in God's word, the necessity of which our Lord taught Nicodemus in those words, *ye must be born again.* John iii. 7. But this was a truth not received by him, any more than by other natural men; for his reply was, how can these things be? John iii. 9.—But we are told,

Secondly, that these things are *foolishness* unto him, that is, when we speak to a natural man about man's sinfulness—man's helplessness—redemption by Christ and regeneration by his Spirit, all these things appear nonsense to him, and the publishers thereof appear to him a set of ignorant enthusiasts,

Thirdly, the Apostle says, neither can he *know* them, that is, *savingly* or *experimentally*; because they are *spiritually discerned*, that is, the *nature*, *possibility* and *excellency* of these things can be discerned by none, but those who have spiritual discernment, and as a natural man's understanding is carnal, he can neither *see*, *know*, nor yet *receive* the things of which I have been speaking.

SERMON XXX.

Dan. vii. 18.

the Saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

THE foregoing part of this chapter contains an account of Daniel's vision of the four great beasts;

beasts; at which he was much troubled, but the Lord who is always ready to deliver his people, made known to him the interpretation thereof, informing him that the four *beasts*, were four *kings*, and that notwithstanding their threatening against the *Saints* of the Most High shall *take* the kingdom, and *possess* the kingdom for ever, even ever and ever. Now notwithstanding some may think, that this passage refers more immediately to a *Political* kingdom, yet sure I am that it is true of a *Spiritual* one, in which sense I mean to consider it; and in doing which, I shall endeavour

I. To describe the *Saints* of the Most High,
and

II. Take notice of *What* is said of them.

First, then I am to describe a *Saint*, and in doing which, were I to describe him as a *single person*, I should not find a man upon the earth to answer that description; for the wise man tells us there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not. Eccl. vii. 20. But a *Saint* is a *sanctified person*. Now to be sanctified, signifies,

1. To be *set apart*, or separated, this I presume is the meaning of the term in Jude's Epistle which we find is directed to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus and called.—Mark my brethren, these people were in Christ Jesus *before* calling, and were sanctified or set apart in the mind of God for that purpose agreeable to which we find, that *calling* is according to his *purpose*. Rom. viii. 28.
But to be sanctified signifies also

2. To be *purified*, agreeable to which the

He tells us in his Epistle to Titus; that Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity (that is from the charge and punishment of it) and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Tit. ii. 14.—Now this work of *purification* observe, is the work of *sanctification* in the hearts of all God's regenerated people; and is attributed to the spirit of God; accordingly we are told, that God hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation, through *sanctification* of the spirit, and belief of the truth; 2 Thes. i. 13. but there is no *saving* belief of the truth, where there is no *sanctification* of the spirit. We may observe,

3. That of this work of *sanctification* Christ is the source. Accordingly we are told by the Apostle, that of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, *sanctification* and redemption; (1 Cor. i. 30.) agreeable to which, John says, when speaking of the gifts, of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace; John i. 16. that is, the grace of God into their hearts; for, or in consequence of God's grace, or love and favour towards them. And then is one who possesses the grace and spirit of God in his heart, by which he is brought to see the odious nature of sin, to hate it, and to turn from it; and also to discover the *suitableness* there in Christ, to love him, and cleave unto him as the only way of life and salvation—in short, a saint is one that is born again, John iii. 5. or regenerated by the Spirit of God, whose *conscience* is purified, or purged from the *guilt* of sin, Heb. ix. his heart purified from the *love* of it, Acts ii. 9. and be saved from the *dominion* of it in his life and conversation, Rom. vi. 14. and thus made fit to be a partaker of the inheritance of the Saints

Saints in light; (Col. i. 12.) God having purged his heart by faith. Acts xv. 9.

But we may observe,

4. That these are called the Saints of the *Most High*, that is, of the most high God, which is perfectly agreeable to what the Apostle says in Ephesians ii. 10. where he expressly tells us, when speaking of the Saints, we are his *workmanship*, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. But the margin reads it, the Saints of the *High ones*, even of those *three High ones*, that bear record in Heaven, that is to say, the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST, and these three are one. 1 John v. 7.—But let us proceed as proposed.

II. To take notice of *What* is said of them. The text tells us, they shall *take* the kingdom, and *possess* the kingdom for ever; even for ever and ever.—From which words we may gather,

1. That there is a *kingdom* for the Saints. Now sometimes by the term *kingdom*, the kingdom of God's grace is intended, as in the prayer our Lord taught his Disciples, where it is said thy kingdom come. Matt. vi. 10. But this is not the kingdom to be understood in the words of my text, for every Saint of God upon the earth is in possession of this kingdom already. But the kingdom alluded to is one, which is in *reserve* for them, and which they shall hereafter possess; therefore by the term kingdom, I think, *Heaven* may be understood. Agreeable to which idea, our Lord when addressing his Disciples told them, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day, when I will drink it new with you in my *Father's kingdom*; that is to say, in the kingdom of Heaven. The kingdom becomes the *Saints'* property by *deed* and *gift*; accordingly we find our Lord says, for the encouragement

encouragement of his people, fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom; Luke xii. 32. that is, the kingdom of glory; for says David, the Lord gives grace and glory. (Psal. lxxxiv. 11.)—Therefore,

2. We are told, that the Saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom. Now by taking it, we are not to understand that the Saints will meet with any opposition on God's part, so as to be constrained to use violence or force in this matter; but by taking it we are to understand, that the Saints shall receive it as a free gift from God; therefore says James, hearken my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him? yes, and all such are brought to love him here, shall enjoy this kingdom hereafter; therefore our Lord will add to them at the last, with, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 34. Mark then, ye Saints of God; a kingdom was prepared for you from the foundation of the world; and by and by you shall be called to inherit it.—

The text tells us, that the Saints shall possess in spite of all their enemies, and that too, not a few days, months, or years only, but for ever, for ever and ever.—From the whole then we learn, that all God's chosen and redeemed people have a kingdom prepared for, and given to them; these people God sanctifies and makes meet for it, and afterwards puts them into the full possession, and enjoyment of it for ever, even for ever ever.

S E R M O N XXXI.

Luke xii. 32.

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

IN the former part of this chapter, we find Christ guarding his Disciples against *hypocrisy*, and *fearfulness* in publishing the doctrines of the everlasting gospel.—He then bids them beware of a *covetousness* relative to *temporal* things, and shows them the impropriety thereof, by introducing a parable concerning the ground of a rich man which brought forth plentifully.—He afterwards guards them against a *sinful* thoughtfulness for the things of this life, advises them to seek the kingdom of God, and assures them, that all these *temporal* things shall be added to them; after which he subjoins the words of my text, saying, *fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

In meditating on which words, let us attend,

- I. To this *Flock*,
- II. To its *Properties*, and
- III. To the *Ground* of their *Encouragement*.

First, as to the *Flock* mentioned in the words of my text, the whole *Church* of God upon the earth are intended by it, in which is included every *believer* in Christ. These are compared to, and called by the name of *sheep*, in the gospel by *St. John*; where Christ says, when speaking of his *people*, *my sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me.* John x. 27.—Now these *sheep*

flock of sheep, are separated from the rest of mankind.

1. In *Election*, for God having fixed his love upon the persons of his people, in order to secure their present and eternal salvation, chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they might be holy and without blame before him. Eph. i. 4.

2. These were *separated* also by Christ in *redemption*, for we are told by him, that he laid down his life for his *sheep*, John x. 15. and the Apostle tells us, that he (that is Christ) hath purchased the church with his own blood; (Acts xx. 28.) which clearly proves, that like a flock of sheep they are considered as a separate people.—But,

3. They are separated also in *effectual calling*, when they become folded together in a gospel church-state; agreeable to which, our Lord told his Disciples, because I have *chosen* you out of the world, (that is, from among the men of it) therefore the world hateth you, (John xv. 19.) which clearly shews them to be a separate people from others.—Now we may observe,

1. That over this flock Christ is the shepherd, accordingly we find, he said unto his Disciples, I am the *good shepherd*, (John x. 11.) and Peter calls him the *chief shepherd*, and says, that when the good shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Pet. v. 4. Let it be remembered, brethren,

2. That Christ like a good shepherd *seeks* for his sheep, for thus saith the Lord God, behold, I even will both search my sheep, and *seek* them out. Jer. xxxiv. 11. and having found them, he like a good shepherd will

3. *Feed* them, with the best of food, accordingly
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we are told, he shall feed his flock like a shepherd (Isai. xl. 11.) of which David was conscious when he said, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Psal. xxiii. 1.—But,

7. He like a good shepherd *watches* over, and *defends* them, and therefore it is, that no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper. (Isai. li. 17.) for he is a wall of fire round about his people, (Zech. ii. 5.) and he that is the keeper of Israel, neither slumbers nor sleeps. Psal. cxxi. 4.—Again,

8. He like a good shepherd *restores* the *distress* of his flock; therefore says David, he *restored* my soul; he *leadeth* me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake: Psal. xxiii. 3. and in another place, he says to his soul, he *pardoneth* all thine iniquities, he *healeth* all thy diseases. Psal. ciii. 3. But let us attend,

II. To the *Properties* of this flock, and

First, We are told, it is a *little one*, the flock which God have in all ages of the world been little, when compared with the bulk of mankind, and this appears not only from the *text* now under consideration; but also from various other parts of the word of God, for if we advert to the state of God's Church or flock,

1. In *Noah's time*, we shall find that little was its property; for the Apostle Peter tells us, that of the Ark which Noah had prepared, *few*, that is, eight souls (only) were saved by the water, (1 Pet. iii. 20.) which clearly proves, that the flock which Christ was at that time a *little one*.

2. So it was also in *Abraham's time*, for when he was pleading with God, on the behalf of Sodom, the Lord told him, that he would spare the city

the sake of *ten* righteous people, if *ten* could be found therein, (Gen. xviii. 32.) but so small was the flock, of which I am speaking, that for lack of *ten*, the *city* was destroyed.—But,

3. It was a *little Flock* likewise, at the time that Christ was upon this earth, as appears from the language of my *text*, in which the Church of God is so called, as it may also in this present day; for if we could separate the *openly profane* and the *formalists*, from the real people of God, we should still find it as expressed in my *text*, a *little Flock*.—But

Secondly, Christ's flock is likewise a *fearful one*, that is to say, they fear the *number, power, and policy* of their enemies. They have sometimes fears relative

1. To their outward state and condition, lest they should want food to eat and raiment to put on, as they have also,

2. Relative to their eternal state, lest they should not be beloved of God—or lest the work of grace be never begun; and if it were, they sometimes fear that the Lord will cast them off, and consign them to everlasting misery, on account of their sinning against him, and for their unfaithfulness to him.—But this leads me,

III. To the *Ground* of their Encouragement, which is contained in these words, it is your *Father's* pleasure to *give* you the *kingdom*. By the kingdom in our text, the kingdom of *Heaven*, or *Glory* is intended. This kingdom becomes yours, ye sheep of Christ by deed of *gift*, this kingdom, Christ has taken possession of for you, John xiv. 2. and the office of God's spirit to make you meet for it, Col. i. 12. and by and by, you shall be adorned with, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the

the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 34. Therefore fear not, little flock, for since it is your Father's good pleasure to give you this kingdom, be assured that he will give you all things that pertain to life and godliness in the way to it. 2 Pet. i. 3. For the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing (by the way) will be withheld from them that walk uprightly. Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

S E R M O N XXXII.

Genesis xxiv. 31.

Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wheresoever thou art without?—

THIS chapter begins with informing us, of the concern which Abraham had for procuring a suitable wife for his son Isaac—for which purpose he employed his eldest servant, whose duty was, not to take one from among the Canaanites but out of his own country—and after taking an oath that he would execute his master's orders, he departed to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nisibis, and to a well near that place. We are informed also, that this servant prayed unto the Lord for success, and desired likewise direction by a token, which was granted him—he met with a damsel, who answered the token, of whom he enquired whose daughter she was, and whether they had room for him and his, in their house; and when being returned, he gave thanks to God for directing him, and for thus far making his journey prosperous—the damsel went and acquainted her parents with what she had met with at the well; on which

her brother *Laban* went out and addressed the servant, saying, come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without?—By accommodating which words, we shall have three things for our consideration, which are,

- I. The *Character* addressed,
- II. The *Invitation* given, and
- III. The *Question* asked.

First, as to the *Character* addressed in the above-mentioned text, he is called the *blessed* of the Lord. This therefore will apply to all God's regenerate people, who will appear to be a blessed people of the Lord, when they are considered as the objects of his everlasting love, (*Jer. xxxi. 3.*) which love is

1. *Free*, accordingly we are informed by the Lord himself, when speaking of his people, I will heal their backslidings, and love them *freely*, which shows, that the love of God as it fixes on the persons of his people, is *free*, and *undeserved*.—But,

2. This love of which I am now speaking is *sovereign* likewise. This appears, I think, from what is recorded in *Deut. vii. 7, 8.* where it is said, the Lord did not *set his love upon you*, nor *choose you*, because ye were more in number than any people—because the Lord loved you, that is, in a *sovereign* way; which words are not only applicable to *Israel*, literally so speaking; but are true also, respecting all the *spiritual Israel* of God.—And

3. This love as it is free and sovereign, so also *unchangeable*; agreeable to which we are told, that God rests in his love; (*Zeph. iii. 17.*) that God's love is always the same towards those who are the objects thereof, and this proves them to be a blessed people.

4. We find also, that the above-mentioned *sons*, were *chosen* in Christ before the foundation of the world, and were blessed in him early, with all spiritual blessings; (Eph. i. 4.) therefore we are told that the Lord gives *grace and glory*; Psal. lxxxiv. 11. which clearly proves them to be a blessed people indeed. They are blessed this life with *grace*, which they partake of regeneration, in order to make them meet for that *glory* which is in reserve for them—they are blessed with a *justifying righteousness*, Rom. iii. 24. with a *full and free pardon* of every sin; Psal. ciii. 3.—they are blessed with *constant supplies of grace* from Christ's fulness, to enable them to persevere in the ways of God; John i. 16.—they are blessed in *death*, for blessed are the souls which die in the Lord; Rev. xiv. 13.—and they will be addressed at the last with, *come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*; Matt. xxv. 34. and this will be the glorious privilege of all God's people, because they are the blessed subjects of the Father's love, they are interested in the blessed and complete redemption of the Son, and are blessed with the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit of God.—Proceed we now,

II. To the *Invitation* given—which is contained in these two words—*come in*—in which language every awakened sinner, ought to be addressed and encouraged by God's ministers, because, from a sense of their own sinfulness and unworthiness, are apt to keep at a distance, not only from the *people* of God, but also from the ordinance of the Lord's supper; judging themselves unworthy to keep company with the former, as well as to partake of the latter.—But, *come in thou blessed*

the Lord; cast in thy lot with us, God hath received thee, and we will not reject thee, come thou (therefore) with us, we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. Numb. x. 29. Remember, ye poor distressed sinners, our Father keeps a good and plentiful house, he has spread a table with the best of food; for Christ says, *my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* John vi. 55.—Besides, he speaks of himself also as the bread of life; John vi. 35, and having thus furnished his table, he addresses you, ye poor disconsolate sinners, and says, COME, for all things are now ready, Luke xiv. 17. O every one that *thirsteth*, (says he) come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; (O blessed words) come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price. Isai. lv. 1. Besides, there is set forth to your view in our Father's house, every blessing that you stand in need of——there is

Pardon for the guilty,
 Righteousness for the unrighteous,
 Peace for the distressed,
 Strength for the weak,
 Wisdom for the ignorant,
 Healing for the diseased—and
 Heaven for the Hell-deserving.

Come in therefore thou blessed of the Lord, where-
 art thou without?

This leads me to consider,

III. The *Question* asked—in doing which, I
 will attend to some objections, which are found
 in the minds of these blessed ones, arising from a
 sense of their own unworthiness; and which have
 a tendency to keep them from the ordinance of the
 Lord's supper, and at a distance from God's people.

I. One objection which is found in the minds

of awakened sinners is, *I am not worthy*. This objection was found in the *prodigal* of old, whose language was, *I am no more worthy to be called a son*, Luke xv. 19. but those who feel their unworthiness, are those, who are invited to come even by Christ himself, who says, come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. xi. 28. And as they are invited to come by Christ, so also such should be invited by his *ministers*; we therefore address him in the words of my text, saying, come in the blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? for if you stay till you are worthy, you will never come at all, neither to join the people to God, nor yet to partake of this ordinance.

2. Another objection which is found in the minds of those, who are awakened by the Spirit of God is, *I am afraid to come to this ordinance, lest I should sin afterwards; and if I should, what will become of me?* Now, that people sin after they have received the Sacrament, there is no doubt, for no one can live without it; though it is the desire of every new-born soul to shun it as much as possible. But remember, ye timorous souls, that when Jesus died, he made atonement for all your sins; not only for those committed *before* you partake of this ordinance, but also for those that may be committed afterwards; for says the Apostle John, *the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin*; 1 John 1. 7. therefore never think of *standing without*, till you can live without sin, for if so, you will never come at all. — But,

3. Some *stand without*, because they suppose that all present at this ordinance, are not good people; but this will be an objection against not only ourselves with us, but also with any other people whatsoever; since I think, I may venture to say, without

any breach of charity, that there is not a *pure Church* to be found upon the earth; for when there were only *twelve, one of them* (we are told) *was a Devil*. John vi. 70. Therefore let others be as bad as they may, if you do this in remembrance of Christ, you shall not be disappointed, for they that wait upon him shall renew their strength. Come in therefore, thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? since God and his ministers invite thee.

SERMON XXXIII.

Psaln ix. 9.

The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed.—

AT the beginning of this psalm, we find David determined to praise God, and to shew forth his marvellous works—for the Lord had maintained his right and his cause—he had rebuked the wicked and destroyed the wicked—he then reflects upon God in the character of a judge and says, he shall judge the world in righteousness, and minister judgment to the people in uprightness, and shews us moreover in the words of my text, that the Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed; in which words, two things are to be attended to,

- I. *The Persons, and*
- II. *What the Lord will be to them.*

First, with regard to the *Persons* mentioned in my text, not all oppressed persons are intended, there are many in the world, who are oppressed in

in a variety of forms, to whom the *promise* in the text does not belong. But the oppressed spoken of in the above-mentioned passage, are all such as have been quickened by the Spirit of God, and have their understandings enlightened to see their sinfulness, and their lost state both by nature and by practice——And such as these are oppressed with;

1. The *guilt and burden of sin*, a sense of which made David say, thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore—for mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. Psal. xxxviii. 2—5. This was the experience of the *Publican*, mentioned in Luke xviii. 13. and of the *Sailer* mentioned in Acts ix. 30. as it is also of every newly awakened sinner, who from a feeling sense of the burden of sin, is brought to cry, God be merciful to me a sinner. But the awakened sinner is oppressed also

2. With *temptation*, and this is the common lot of all God's people; for says the Apostle, there hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to men, 1 Cor. x. 13. that is, to quickened and enlightened men, as these Corinthians were. Mark then, ye oppressed souls, temptations are the common lot of all the children of God; but, O consider for your encouragement under them, the following words in the above-mentioned text, God is faithful, and such is his love for you, that he will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, (to bear) but will with the temptation make a way to your escape, and when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up his standard against him. Isai. lix. 19. Therefore instead of writing bitter things against yourselves in times of temptation, remember the words of James, where he says, blessed is the man that endure

through temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive a crown of life, (James i. 12.) blessed be God for that, for although temptations may rob us for a while of our comforts, they cannot rob us of our crown.—But God's people called by grace, are sometimes oppressed also

By wicked men, of this oppression David complains, where he says, Lord, how are they increased that trouble me? many are they that rise up against me. Psal. iii. 1. Unconverted people have in all ages of the world, been troublers of the people of God; and that too, from the same principle that Cain became a troubler of his brother Abel, and at length slew him. The reason of which was, (as the Apostle tells us) because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 1 John iii. 12. Agreeable to which, our Lord told his Disciples, saying, if ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you, John xv. 19. and informs them moreover, in the 20th verse of the above chapter, that if (or seeing) they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. But the Apostle, though persecuted yet not forsaken, 2 Cor. iv. 9. and that is the christian's mercy. the awakened sinner is also oppressed

With a corrupt nature, of this David was sensible, when he said, I was shapen in iniquity, in sin did my mother conceive me; Psal. li. 5. as Paul also, when he said, I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. Rom. vii. 18. Mark, my brethren, Paul does not say, as a christian had no good thing in him, for he certainly had, as have all God's regenerated people; but what he says is, I know that in my (or corrupt nature) dwells no good thing; therefore

therefore says this same Apostle, when I would do good, evil is present with me. Rom. vii. 21.—
But let us attend,

II. To *What* the Lord will be to them,—the text tells us, he will be a *refuge* to them; in the *refuge* (no doubt) to the cities of refuge mentioned in Numbers xxxv. 11.—this the Lord Jesus Christ is to all his people

1. By his *life* and *death*, for in the former he wrought out a complete righteousness, and in the latter made a complete atonement, by which we are completely secured from condemnation in the sight of God, for he as our surety took our sin upon himself, for the Lord laid (or caused to meet) upon Jesus, the iniquity of all his people. Isai. liii. 6. and when *sin* was removed from the *persons* of his people, *punishment* was removed with it; therefore we are told, that Christ was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. Isai. liii. 5. But then you have to remember, ye *oppressed ones*, that as Christ was punished for your iniquities, God will never punish you *eternally* for them; for that would be to receive a *double* payment for the same offences, which a just God can never require. O what a mercy it is then ye *oppressed souls*, that Christ became your surety (Heb. vii. 22.) and that he gave his life a ransom for you, Matt. xx. 28. for it was that he became a refuge, both from the *charge* and the *punishment* of sin.—He is a refuge

2. From *Satan*, the *world* and every *enemy*. Accordingly we are told, that no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee, thou shalt condemn: this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.

His righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. *Isaiah lii. 17.*—And,

3. He is a refuge for the oppressed at *all times*—in times of affliction, temptation, persecution, and distress—in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment.—And mark, he is

4. A *strong* refuge, for Christ is called a *strong* hold to which the prisoners of hope are exhorted to run. *Zech. ix. 12.*—Therefore,

5. He is a *safe* refuge, for the name of the Lord (that is, Christ or his perfections) is a strong tower, whither the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. *Prov. xviii. 10.*

From these considerations then it evidently appears, that the Lord is, and will be a refuge for the oppressed; even a refuge in times of trouble; and that he is the same yesterday, to-day, and ever. *Heb. xiii. 8.*

SERMON XXXIV.

Isaiah lix. 5.

They shall hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the spider's web; he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

THE Prophet begins this chapter by setting forth the power of God, saying, the Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear that it cannot hear. He then proceeds to set forth the consequence of sinning against God, which he charges them with various crimes which they were guilty, and tells them in my

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text,

text, that they hatch cockatrice eggs, and use the spider's web; he that eateth of their eggs shall die, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a serpent.—In discoursing on which words, I now make a few observations, in the order in which they present themselves to me.—And

First, let us take notice of the *Persons* who are addressed, or alluded to by the word *They*. These we find are described in the 2d verse of the chapter, as a people *whose iniquities had separated between them and their God*,—that is, sin like a partition wall divided between them, so that they enjoyed no communion with him in his worship and ordinances, for it caused him to hide his face from them, or withhold from them his gracious presence. From this general charge, the Prophet proceeds to particulars, and tells them, *your hands are full with blood, and your fingers with iniquity*, intimating, that they had been guilty of murder, and that they were disposed to retain their other iniquitous practices of which they were guilty; and it is further added, *your lips have spoken lies, your tongue have muttered perverseness*. The Prophet charges these people with setting forth false doctrines, or doctrines which are contrary to the truth, and this it seems was done out of perverseness, or from a stubborn disposition of mind,—another sin of which these people are charged, that of *injustice*, for we are told, *none call for justice*, that is, for the execution thereof; or as the Syriac version reads it, *there is none that preaches righteously*, or of righteousness,—nor is there a *pleader for truth*, that is, for the truths of God, but either conceal, or deny them.—*They are vain and speak lies*, that is, they trust in that which is nothing worth, and preach false doctrines, or doctrines which are contrary to the scriptures of God.

the dangerous mischief, that is, in their minds, against those who differ in doctrine and practice from *truth*,—and bring forth *iniquity*, not only in word, but likewise in deed. In short, these people alluded to in my text, are *false Prophets*, such as are spoken of by the Apostle Peter, where he says, but *there were false Prophets among the people*, even as *there shall be false teachers among you*, who shall *privily bring in damnable heresies*; 2 Pet. ii. 1. Therefore says my text, *they hatch cockatrice eggs*,—then let us observe,

I. What we are to understand by these *eggs*, and the *hatching* thereof. Now the cockatrice, we have to remember, is a dangerous serpent, which is reported to kill with its breath, or sight; and it is the eggs of this creature, with which we have to do, in the passage now before us.—And here let it be observed, that every false prophet, or teacher, may be compared to this dangerous serpent the cockatrice, and his productions, false doctrines, to the eggs of that creature.—For instance, the doctrine

Of man's turning to God by his *own nature*, power, or strength, is a doctrine which is as *new* to christian experience, as it is to God's in which we are told by Christ himself, that *no man can come to me, except the Father who sent me draw him*. John vi. 44. Whoever therefore says, that he can go to Christ by faith, and salvation without being drawn, preaches a *new doctrine*, and a doctrine which is comparable to the cockatrice eggs, spoken of in my text.—

The doctrine which teaches that men by nature have a *free will* to turn to God at *any time*, is certainly another poisonous doctrine, and

equally as contrary to God's word as the former, for although man's will is free as to *natural things*, it is not so as to *spiritual ones*, therefore if men will or do any thing which is *spiritually* good, it is God who worketh in them, both the one and the other of his own good pleasure : Phil. ii. 13. according to the Father says to the Son, thy people *shall be willing*, in the day of thy power ; Psal. cx. 3. so that this doctrine as well as the former, may be compared to the cockatrice eggs.—But then behold these there is also,

3. The doctrine of *justification before God by works*, this is very often insisted on, though contrary to the word of God, as either of the former ; for says the Apostle, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight ; Rom. iii. 20. so that this doctrine of justification before God by works, may also be compared to the cockatrice eggs ; as may also the doctrine

4. Of sinless perfection,

5. And finally falling from grace ; as well as every other doctrine, which is repugnant to the word of God : now these are first conceived in the minds of unsound preachers, and are afterwards *hatched*, or brought forth in their public ministry.

But let us proceed to observe,

III. That these People are said to *wear the sinner's web*—by which expression we are undoubtedly to understand, that they were trying to work out righteousness, in order to cover themselves therewith ; for it is said in the following verse to the text, their *webs* shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works. Now here brethren, that men's own righteousness is

thing better than a spider's web, which is too *thin* to cover over their sins, and too *weak* to stand, or weather out a storm. — But we have to observe,

IV. That he that eateth of these eggs dieth. — An awful truth indeed! the meaning of which is, he that approves of these false doctrines and embraces them, and feels his mind satisfied with them, and is never taught by the spirit of God to turn from them; and to embrace the truths of the everlasting gospel, or the doctrine of salvation by free and sovereign grace through Jesus Christ; such a character says my text *dieth*, it is an awful proof that he is dead to God here, and that he will die the second death hereafter; which is not to be wondered at, since he lives and dies feeding upon the poisonous eggs, of a poisonous serpent. Let us proceed to observe,

V. The consequence of *crushing* or *breaking* them, for my text says, *and that which is crushed, breaketh out into a serpent*. Now these eggs, or the snakes compared thereto, may be said to be crushed when the ministers of the gospel oppose them, and expose their erroneous nature and tendency, which by the bye, is the duty of every real minister of the gospel to do. And here let me remind you my fellow-labourers, that there are many of these cockatrice eggs that want crushing, besides these few which are above made mention of; therefore may God make us diligent in this necessary employment, although *that which is crushed breaketh out into a serpent*: For the old serpent the Devil will be discovered in all false doctrines, and if we try to expose, or crush them, he will be disturbed thereby, and will try to sting those who crush them, with *reproaches* and *persecutions*.

tions for their pains. This was the case with the Apostle, who never failed to crush these cockatrice eggs, or false doctrines, whenever he met with them; therefore at one time we find him reproached as a *babbler*, (Acts xvii. 18.) at another time he was reproached as a *madman* Acts xxvi. 24. and at another time we find him so closely pressed by his *persecutors*, that his life was in danger. Acts ix. 23—25.

SERMON XXXV.

Isaiah lv. i.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the water, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and yet, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.

WHENEVER we investigate a portion of God's word, it is always necessary to find out the character, or characters to whom such portion belongs, without which we shall run into many errors, and those too of the most important nature; to avoid which errors, ought to be the duty of all those who write, or speak for God; for if we apply those passages to the *wicked*, which are designed with a view (only) to encourage the righteous, we might be addressed in the words of our Lord—ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.—Let us proceed then to examine with caution, for the meaning of the passage under consideration; in doing which, it will be necessary to attend

- I. To the *Persons* addressed, and
- II. To the *Invitation* given them.

First, then we are to attend to the *Persons* who are addressed, and these I think appear evidently to be

1. *The servants of the Lord*, expressly so called in the verse before my text, and against whom no weapon that is formed shall prosper, which in fact is quite sufficient to prove, that those who are addressed in the words of my text, are *not dead sinners*, (for they are not servants of the Lord) but on the contrary, they are the *Church of God*, whose children were taught of the Lord, (Isai. liv. 13.) to forsake sin, and to serve him.

But we may observe,

2. That these *persons* are said in the words of my text, to *thirst*, not observe for the honours, pleasures, and riches of this world, but for the enjoyment of Christ and of the blessings of the everlasting gospel, and are (I presume) such persons, as are spoken of by our Lord in Matthew v. 6. where he says, *blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled*; that they shall be satisfied with an experimental knowledge of their interest therein.

And besides we are to observe,

3. That these people are invited to *eat*, and my brethren, it would be an insult to common sense to suppose, that dead sinners are invited to eat, because that being an action, can be performed by none but *living men*. And none but those who are quickened by the spirit of God, can feed their faith upon Christ the bread of life. Accordingly all such are invited to come to him, for we are told, that *in the last day, that great day of the*

the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, (that is, after the blessings which Christ hath to bestow and which relate to salvation) let him come unto me and drink, John vii. 37. for as a thirsty man gets satisfied by drinking, so shall all those who are thirsting after the blessings of the gospel, be satisfied therewith, in a way of believing in, or coming to Jesus Christ.—But,

4. Another passage of a similar nature to the above-mentioned, we meet with in Revelation xxii. 17. where it is said, *and let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* Mark, my brethren, what these people are invited to partake of, it is the *water of life*. Take notice also of the characters who are invited,—they are;

Him that is athirst,

And whosoever will;

both of which characters must have been quickened by the power of God's Spirit, or the former would never have *thirsted* for the water of life, nor would the latter have been made *willing* to partake of it.—But again,

5. Some perhaps, by way of objection to what has been advanced may say, that these people mentioned in my text, are accused in the following verse, *of spending their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not.* To which may be replied, that this is too frequently the case of many of God's *servants*, besides those who were spoken to in this text; for what are those doing, who are spending their *time* and *strength* in reading unsound books, or hearing erroneous doctrines? which are not bread but chaff, and instead of nourishing, proves destructive to the christian's peace. And again, what are those doing who are labouring for happiness, or peace of mind

in a way in which it cannot be obtained? which I presume is the case with some, under their first awakenings by the Spirit of God, these surely may be said, to spend their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not. But it is time now to proceed,

II. To the *Invitation* given them, a part of which is contained in these words,——*Come, ye, (thirsters) to the waters*; by which waters, I presume, the *ordinances* of the gospel are intended.—The allusion seems to be, to such places by the water-side to which ships laden with provisions come, for the supply of the inhabitants. Accordingly sometimes by *the water*, the water-side is intended, as for instance, where the Lord said to Gideon, the people that are yet too many, bring them down unto the water, (that is, unto the water-side) and I will try them for thee there. Judges iii. 4.

Now it is to these waters or means of grace, that

1. Such are *exhorted to come*, because they are the most likely places to get a supply of their wants, or to have their appetites after divine things satisfied; and the Lord hath said, that they who wait upon him shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as an eagle; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint; Isai. xl. 31. which passage ought to encourage every *thirsty soul* to wait upon God, in all the means of grace, both *public* and *private*. But we may observe,

2. That *he that hath no money* is exhorted to come, that is, not in a natural, but in a spiritual sense. Now, natural men fancy themselves rich, and that they stand in need of nothing; they vainly imagine that they have it in their power to make amends

amends for their *past conduct*, by their *future obedience*, and therefore they conclude, that they can *reconcile God and make their peace* with him. While on the contrary, *sensible sinners* know that they are poor and needy, that they are in debt, and have nothing to pay with; they therefore can tell God, that such are invited to *come*, as well as to *eat*.—But then,

3. What are such invited to partake of? our text tells me—*wine and milk*—by which Christ and the blessings which are exhibited in the gospel are intended: Which may be compared to *wine* for their *antiquity*, and for their *reviving and refreshing* nature, and to *milk*, for its *purity* and *sweetness*, as well as for its *nourishing* quality. But my text tells us also,

4. That these are to be *bought*, but not in a *proper* sense, for no valuable consideration can be given for them, nor have we any thing to procure them with, and therefore the exhortation runs thus, *come, buy wine and milk without money and without price*, that is, receive all the blessings that your *thirsty souls* feel the want of, at the hands of your God, as a free and sovereign gift: And thus shall you be brought experimentally to acknowledge the truth of what David says, which is, that the Lord gives grace and glory, and that no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Psalm lxxxiv. 11. and that he filleth the *hungry* with good things, but the *rich* he sends empty away. Luke i. 53.

SERMON XXXVI.

Malachi iii. 16.

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

THIS chapter presents to our view the messenger, majesty, and grace of Christ. It makes known the rebellion of the people, who from the days of their fathers had gone away from God's ordinances.—It makes mention too, of the sacrilege of which they were guilty, in robbing God, and as forth their infidelity and rebellion in speaking against God, for their words (we are told) had been stout against him, and they said it was in vain to serve him.—But even at that time, there were some few that feared the Lord, and spake one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.—In considering which words, it will be necessary to attend to three things,

- I. The People mentioned,
- II. The Employment they were engaged in,
- III. The Honour conferred upon them.

First, as to the People mentioned in my text, they are those who feared the Lord. Now by the fear of the Lord, we are

- I. Not to understand a slavish fear, which is sometimes

sometimes found in the minds of natural men, who are more afraid of the *punishment* which is inflicted for sin, than they are of that *sin*, which is the cause of their punishment: For this kind of fear may be in the minds of many, who are not employed as were these people spoken of in my text, and who are not honoured by the Lord as they were. This is the *fear* which the Prophet Samuel mentions, where he says, that *all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel*; (Sam. xii. 13.) that is, they had a *slavish fear*, or dread upon their minds, on account of God's answering the prayer of Samuel in sending thunder and rain, according to his request.—But,

2. By the *fear of the Lord* in the words of my text, we are to understand a *filial fear*, or a filial affection in the soul, whereby it is inclined to reverence God, and to approve of his word and way. This fear, of which I am now speaking, is a *new covenant blessing*, and the *gift of God*; therefore he tells us, I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Jer. xxxii. 40. On which passage we may further remark, that the fear not only comes from God, but it causes also its possessor to cleave to God; for the purpose for which it is communicated is, that his people may not depart from him, in their *affections*, nor in their *lives and conversations*.—But let us dismiss this part of our subject, and attend

II. To the *Employment* they were engaged in. And this my text tells us was, *they spoke often one to another*. The subjects on which they spoke or conversed, are not particularly mentioned, but we may naturally conclude, that they were of a *divine and experimental nature*;—such for instance as

1. The *love of God to them*, which is at all times

a pleasing subject to the Saints of God, because it is the source of all their blessings that they enjoy in time, and that they will enjoy when time shall be no more. They delight to speak to each other concerning the *free* and *sovereign* nature of this love; as they do also, of its *durability*, for it is from everlasting to everlasting, the same towards the persons of his people. Jer. xxxi. 3.—
They spoke to each other doubtless

2. Of the *redemption of Christ*, which also is another pleasing subject to all the *Saints* of the Lord, they (no doubt) had their minds fixed on the *work* of Christ who was to come; as we also have upon that same work, of the same Christ who has now actually accomplished it. They spoke one to another doubtless, of the *life of Christ*, in which he wrought out a *righteousness* for all his people; Rom. i. 4. as they did also of his *death*, in which a complete atonement was actually made by him, and received by them. Rom. v. 11. They spoke also,

3. Of the *Spirit's operation*, well knowing, that it was God who had *quickened their souls*, and who had wrought in them both to *will* and to *do* of his good pleasure; (Eph ii. 1. Phil. ii. 13.) and as it was God who began the work in them, so also was God who finished it; for says the Apostle, which hath begun a good work in you, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ; Phil. i. 6. In this matter Paul had not a single doubt, but was confident thereof: Well knowing that the *will* and *power* of God were equal to his *faithfulness*. They spoke one to another in all probability, of the purpose of encouraging each other under *temptations* and *persecutions*, with which they were troubled from Satan, and the rebellious people among whom they lived, (verse 7th) and here let it be observed, that on these and such like subjects, they repeated the Lord spoke—

O

4. Often

4. *Often one to another*, by which it appears, that their minds were taken up with these subjects, and that their hearts were engaged with God; for we are told, that *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*. (Matt. xii. 34.) From whence it appears, that he who has a *heart* for God, has a mouth also to speak *for*, as well as *to* him. But let us proceed to attend,

III. To the *Honour* conferred upon them. It is contained in these words,

1. *The Lord hearkened and heard it*: O wonderful condescension! the Lord (speaking after the manner of men) hearkened to; and heard what they said one to another. O ye Saints of God! take heed then what you say one to another, and always remember that God listens to, and hears you. Which shews his *special regard* for you—the peculiar *notice* he takes of you, and his *approbation* of your conversation, when it turns upon divine subjects, and is agreeable to his word and will. For,

2. *A book of remembrance was written before him*,—in allusion to Kings that keep registers or records; (Ezra iv. 15.) for otherwise it cannot be understood, since it is impossible for God to forget; for he bears in his eternal mind a remembrance of the *persons, thoughts, words, and actions* of all his people; he *searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men*, (Psal. vii. 9.) nor is there a word in my tongue, says David, but I lay it before thee, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Psal. cxxxix. And this book we are informed was written,

3. *For them that feared the Lord*, as above described, and that thought upon his name, that is, who meditated with pleasure and delight upon the

passions of God, as his love, wisdom, power, mercy, justice and faithfulness; which are what we are sometimes to understand by his name, as in Exodus xxiii. 21. where it is said, *my name is in him*. Or by *thinking upon his name* may be intended, meditating with pleasure and profit upon *Jesus Christ*, his blood, righteousness, and fulness, and upon his *free salvation*, which he hath wrought out for all his people;—and for the encouragement of all such, it is said in the following words to those of my text; *they shall be mine faith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that loveth him*.

SERMON XXXVII.

1 Corinthians ix. 27.

But I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

THIS is another of those passages of scripture, which is frequently produced by some people, to prove the possibility of *true believers falling from grace*, even so as to perish eternally, or, (say they) what propriety could the Apostle say, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway—but whether such an idea can be gathered from this text, let us endeavour to find out; and in doing which, it will be necessary to take notice,

- I. Of *What* Paul did, and
- II. Of the reason *Why* he did it.

First, we are to take notice of *What* Paul saith, which is contained in these words, *but I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection.* Now this implies,

1. That the Apostle was *watchful* over himself, and this is a duty, not only enjoined Paul and the rest of the Apostles, but also all the *Disciples* of Christ: therefore says our Lord, what I say unto you, I say unto all, watch. Mark xiii. 37. And certainly the christian has as much need to watch himself, as he has any other enemy that besets him. But then,

2. What does the Apostle mean by *this* body mentioned in my text: some have thought that his *natural body* is intended; which he kept under and brought into subjection by immoderate *watchings, fastings, whipping and scourging, &c.* But whosoever they are that practise the above-mentioned austerities, thinking to become religious thereby, will find themselves greatly deceived; for none of them have any tendency to regenerate the heart, without which no true religion can be enjoyed by them. Therefore,

3. By the *body* mentioned in my text, the *body of sin*, or the corrupt nature is intended. Of this body, the same Apostle makes mention in *Romans* vi. 6. and complains of, and groans under it, in *Romans* vii. 24. saying, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the *body* of this death? and mark here brethren, the Apostle calls it *body*, it was what he brought into the world with him; it was what stuck close to him, and never left him, till he went out of this world; and every one who is experimentally acquainted with this *body of corruption*, is said, in the language of the scripture

to know the plague of *his own heart*. 1 Kings viii. 38.—But then the Apostle tells us,

4. That *he kept it under, and brought it into subjection*, not observe, that he brought this *corrupt body* to love God, his word, and his ways; for we are told to the contrary of that, by this same Apostle, where he says, the carnal mind is *enmity* against God, it is *not subject to the law of God*, neither indeed *can be*; Rom. viii. 7. but when the Apostle says, I keep my *body under, and bring it into subjection*, he evidently means, that by the grace of God, this *corrupt body* was laid under restraints, and that his practice was to apply unto God for a supply of grace to keep it in that situation; by which practice he through the Spirit, mortified the deeds of the body, (Rom. viii. 13.) and put off the *old man* with his deeds, (Col. iii. 9.) making no provision for the *flesh* to fulfil the lusts thereof; Rom. xiii. 14. and thus yielded himself unto God, *one who was alive from the dead, and his members as instruments of righteousness unto God*. Rom. vi. 13.—Proceed we now to take notice,

II. Of the reason *Why* he did this. Which is contained in the following words, namely,—*lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway*. Under which head of discourse, let us consider,

First, what the Apostle does *not* mean, and secondly, what he does mean by this expression. And first, the Apostle could not mean by the above expression, that he was afraid of being eternally cast off by the Lord.

1. Because that would contradict his own experience, where he says, I am persuaded that neither *death*, nor *life*, nor *angels*, nor *principalities*, nor *powers*, nor *things present*, nor *things to come*; nor

height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us, from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. viii. 38, 39.

2. Now this love of God towards his people prevents their total apostacy, for we are told, we will *rest* in his *love*, Zeph. iii. 17. and that whom he once loves, he loves unto the end; (John x. 1.) not only to the end of their lives, but to all eternity; for says he, I am God and change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Mal. iii. 6.—Again,

3. The *work of Christ* is another thing, which secures his people from total apostacy: for as he went to the end of the law for righteousness sake to them, (Rom. x. 4.) so also he died to atone for their sins, and to satisfy infinite justice on their account; therefore we are told, that Christ also himself once suffered for sins, the *just* for the *unjust*, that he might bring us to God; 1 Pet. iii. 18. that is, to the knowledge of God here, and to the enjoyment of him hereafter: and if these ends were not answered on all those for whom Christ died, the design of his death must be entirely frustrated. But,

4. The *Spirit's work* is a security also, from total apostacy of the Saints of God. For as God is God, his work is *perfect*, Deut. xxxii. 4. If there were any of the Saints to be finally cast away, it would prove the work which was wrought in them to be *imperfect*; and if it be admitted that the work resembles the workman, it would prove him to be imperfect who wrought it, which borders so close upon blasphemy, that surely no one would venture to affirm such a thing. Besides the Apostle tells us that he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, (Phil. i.

now if Paul were right in preaching this doctrine, (and he says he was confident of it) then they who preach a contrary doctrine, by saying, that the Saints of God may fall into Hell, and in that sense become castaways, *must be wrong*.--And,

5. God's *faithfulness* to his promises, moreover secures the Saints from total apostacy, or finally falling from grace. For our Lord says, when speaking of his *sheep*, they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands: John x. 28. That man therefore who says, that they may be plucked out of Christ's hands, and perish everlastingly, is a *liar*, and the truth is not in him; 1 John 2. 4. for God hath positively said, he will not *alter* *any thing* which is gone out of his lips; Psal. lxxxix. 34. now it is gone out of his lips that his *sheep shall never perish*, and as he will not alter, or go back from that expression; then it is utterly impossible that any of Christ's sheep should perish everlastingly, and consequently this cannot be the Apostle's meaning by the term *castaway*, in the text now under consideration.--Therefore,

Secondly, let us consider what he does mean by *castaway*. And here let it be observed brethren, that the Apostle's concern at this time was, as he was fully sensible of the corruptions of his nature, that some of them should break out, and thereby his ministry be justly blamed, and he himself brought into contempt, and so be rejected and disapproved of by men, and become *useless* as a preacher. Therefore when the Apostle says, I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a *castaway*; he could not mean, *I should be eternally damned*; for he was persuaded to the contrary of that, (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) his meaning is, lest he should by any part of his

his conduct bring a reproach on the gospel, become useless as a preacher, and a *castaway* to men, that is, not only cast out of Church *fellowship* and *communion* with them; but also discharged from his *office* as a *preacher*, and like an overworn instrument which is out of tune, hung by as *useless*: to avoid which, the Apostle cried unto God for fresh supplies of grace, to keep under his *body* of sin, and made no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

SERMON XXXVIII.

Psalms xci. 1.

*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High
shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*

THIS Psalm is thought by some to be penned by Moses; but others ascribe it to David, and it is generally thought, that it was penned by him on account of the *pestilence*, which came upon the people, through his numbering them—some think that the Messiah is meant, and that the Psalm contains promises of *safety* to him as man—but it seems to me, best to understand it of every good man, who is always safe under the divine protection; for it is said in the words of my text—*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.* In discoursing on which words, I shall endeavour to shew,

I. What we are to understand by the *secret place of the most High*, and

II. That

II. Take notice of the *safety* of those who *dwell* there.

First, as to the *secret place*, which is mentioned in my text, we may understand thereby,

i. *The book of life*; and that there is such a book, the scriptures clearly testify. Accordingly as said by the Apostle, I entreat thee also, true fellow, help those women who laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with every other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the *book of life*, Phil. iv. 3. which clearly proves there is such a book, or the names of these people of whom the Apostle writes, could not have been in it.—We may observe again, that this book is mentioned also, by Saint John in the Revelation, where it is said, he that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and says, I will not blot his name out of the *book of life*. Rev. iii. 5. And if God will not, the Devil cannot, therefore they must always remain there.—It is said also, in another part of the same book of Revelations, and they that dwell on the earth shall worship, whose names were not written in the *book of life* before the foundation of the world. Rev. xvii. From which passage we may learn, not only there is a *book of life*, but also that the names of some were written in it before the foundation of the world, and that others were not written in it. Now this may be called the *secret place of the High*; because the names of all those who are written in this book, are known to him, and to him only.—Or,

By this *secret place* mentioned in my text, we may understand the *covenant of grace*; which was first made into by the *sacred Three*; in which the plan of salvation was laid down and agreed upon,

o be executed in the fulness of time; that the people of God might be honourably acquitted from the hand of justice, their souls sanctified here, and glorified hereafter. For all which there is ample provision made by the Lord, in the above-mentioned covenant of grace. Now of this covenant David speaks, where he says, the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his *covenant*. (Psal. xxv. 14.) He also the Lord by the Prophet, where he says, I will give thee for a *covenant of the people*; (Isa. xlii. 6.) that is, for a *covenant head* to the people: and this covenant is an everlasting one, is common to all those who read Hebrews xiii. 20. where the blood of Christ is called by the Apostle, *the blood of the everlasting covenant*, which everlasting covenant was made with Christ the *head*, and with all his members in him; and this covenant of grace may be called the *secret place of the most High*, because none but himself is fully acquainted with those who are included therein.—Or,

3. By this *secret place* mentioned in my text, we may understand *Christ*, in whom all his people were chosen before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4.) to grace here, and to glory hereafter; and this is what some understand by the *chief corner stone* and the *secret places of the stairs*, mentioned in Song ii. 14. and this also may be called the *secret place of the most High*, because none can positively tell who the chosen of the Lord are, but God himself.—And,

4. Some think by the *secret place of the most High*, the *bosom of God's love* is intended.—In which ever idea be retained, no error can arise therefrom, because he who is interested in one of them, is interested in them all.
Therefore let us proceed,

II. To take notice of the *Safety* of those who shall there.—We are told in my text, that such shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty: Accordingly the Church in the Song of Solomon, when speaking of Christ, says, *I sat down under his shadow with great delight*, and his fruit was sweet to my taste, (Song ii. 3.) and the Prophet tells us, that a man, (that is the God-man Christ Jesus) shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; Isai. xxxii. 2. from which passages we find, that the people of God are safe and secure under the shadow of the Almighty; where they are screened,

From the *curses of the law*, for though the law pronounces every transgressor accursed; (Gal. iii. 10.) yet we are told, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, (Gal. iii. 13.) Thus therefore, under the shadow of the Almighty Jesus, all his people are secured from the curse and condemnation, for there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ. Rom. viii. 1. All such are screened also,

From the *sword of justice*; the Father having given full satisfaction at the hands of our surety, who not only fulfilled the law, but suffered the penalty, and satisfied infinite justice; and now declares, that *fury is not in me*. Isai. xxvii. 4. Therefore, those who are under the shadow of the Almighty Jesus, are screened,

From the *wrath of God*; which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; Rom. i. 18. for it is expressly for the comfort of every convinced sinner, that Christ hath delivered us from wrath to come

(1 The

(1 Thes. i. 10.) so that none of those for whom he endured God's wrath here, can on any account whatsoever, suffer it in Hell hereafter.

We may observe again, that those who are under the shadow of the Almighty, are screened,

4. From an ill-natured world, and a raging Devil: Therefore it is said, for the comfort of God's people, that no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper, Isai. liv. 17. blessed be God for that; for if so, were all our enemies combined together, they could not do us any real harm, because we are screened from danger, under the shadow of the Almighty.

And another thing contained in my text for the encouragement of God's people is,

5. *They shall abide there*, O blessed promise, may God give us the comfort of it; for they are *now* under his shadow—they *are now* under it, and blessed be God they *ever shall* be there, in spite of all their enemies, were they to combine their force together. We may truly say then, that happy is the people that is in such a case; yet happy is that people, whose God is the Lord. Psalm cxliv. 15.

SERMON XXXIX.

James i. 17.

Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, unto whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

THIS Epistle was written by James the servant of God, to encourage those to whom it was

written under their various afflictions, knowing this, says the Apostle, that the trial of your faith worketh patience.—He then informs them, that if any man lack wisdom, (how to act under his various temptations or afflictions) he is to ask it of God, and for their encouragement tells them, he giveth to all Men liberally, or bountifully, and upbraideth not. But he directs them to ask in faith nothing wavering, for says he, a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.—After which he tells them, that blessed is the man that endureth temptation, or afflictions; for when he is tried, (according to the mind and will of God) he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. He then introduces the words of my text, saying, every good gift and perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Discourfing on which words let us take notice,

- I. Of these *Gifts*,
- II. Of their *Properties*, and
- III. Observe from *Whence*, and from *Whom* they come.

First, then we are to take notice of these *Gifts*—under which head, we might take into our view, gifts of *nature* and *providence*, as well as those of *grace*, but as I presume the latter are principally intended, I shall therefore confine myself wholly to—And we may observe,

That *Christ* doubtless is one of the gifts alluded to in this text. Agreeable to which, the Lord when addressing the Son, says, I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thee, and will keep thee, and GAVE thee for

a covenant of the people, *Isai. xlii. 6.* that is, for a covenant-head to the people, whom he hath redeemed and chosen in Christ to salvation. From whence it is manifest that *Christ* evidently appears to be a gift of God to his people. And as Christ is a gift of God to them, so also are all the spiritual blessings which are treasured up in him, for, says the Apostle, that he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things: (*Rom. viii. 32.*) such as *pardoning of sins*, *righteousness* and *eternal life*. —

But we may observe again, that as Christ is the above-mentioned blessings are gifts, so likewise

2. The *Holy Ghost*, as appears by the Apostle's words, where he says, he, therefore that despiseth not man, but God, who hath also sent unto us his *Holy Spirit*. *1 Thes. iv. 8.* Agreeable to which idea, Christ says, when addressing his Disciples, I will pray the Father, and he will GIVE you another comforter, that he may abide with you FOR EVER. *John xiv. 16.* From these scriptures it evidently appears, I think, that the *Holy Ghost* is a free gift of God to his people. And as the *Holy Ghost* is a gift, so likewise,

3. Is that *grace* which he communicates. Agreeable to which we are told, the Lord GIVETH grace. *Psal. lxxxiv. 11.* And here let it be remembered, brethren, that as *Christ*, the *Holy Ghost*, and the *grace* which he communicates, are all of them gifts and the effects of God's love to his people; and as these must be given to them, before they can be regenerated and converted; it evidently follows that God must love his people in an unregenerated and unconverted state; or else he would not have given his Son to and for them, nor would he give them his spirit and grace, to bring them out of that state: for regeneration and conversion are

the causes of God's love towards his people, but the effects thereof; and as every *cause* must be *prior* to its *effect*, consequently God's love must be *prior* to regeneration and conversion. Jer. xxxi. 3.
Proceed we now to take notice,

II. Of the *Properties* of these gifts, which my text tells us, are *good* and *perfect*.—We may observe

1. That Christ is expressly called the *good* Shepherd; John x. 11. he is *good essentially* as well as *communicatively* good, to all his dear people; and indeed, this *property* is equally applicable to all the *acts* and *characters* which he sustains in his word; for he is

A good *Surety*, Heb. vii. 22.

A good *Saviour*, Heb. vii. 25.

A good *Brother*, Prov. xvii. 17.

A good *Physician*, Psal. ciii. 3.

A good *Friend*, Prov. xviii. 24. and

A good *GOD*, &c. Isai. ix. 6.

As he is a *good gift*, so also he is a *perfect* one; he is *perfect* in *himself*, and perfectly executes the *order* to which he is appointed by the Father; and perfectly fills up the *characters* which he sustains.

And as he himself is a *good* and *perfect* gift of God to his people;—so also are,

2. All the *Blessings*, which flow from him, as *peace*, *righteousness*, *justification*, *sanctification*, and *eternal life*. These are all *good gifts* bestowed on the people of God, and equally as *perfect* as they are *good*, for he is the rock and his work is *perfect*. Deut. xxxii. 4.—But we may observe,

3. That the *Spirit* likewise is a *good* and *perfect* gift, which the Lord bestows upon all his people; this must needs be the case, because he is God, accordingly lying unto the Holy Ghost, is said by

the Apostle to be lying unto God. Acts v. 4. Therefore as God, he is *good* both *essentially* and *communicatively*; and the work which he performs in the hearts of his people being of the same nature with himself, must be *perfect* as well as *good*; and that work which is found to be imperfect, is not of God; for wherever he begins to work, he always carries that work forward, and never leaves it till it is finished. Phil. i. 6. And as the Spirit is a good and perfect gift, so also is,

4. That *Grace*, which he communicates to the souls of all those on whom he works by his Almighty power. This is *good* in its nature. Accordingly it is said of young Abijah, that there was some *good thing* found in him towards the Lord God of Israel, (1 Kings xiv. 13.) which no doubt, was the grace of God in his heart. And as it is *good* in its nature, so also it is *perfect* in its operation, and may with propriety be compared to *leaven*, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the *whole* was *leavened*. Matt. xiii. 33. And as the above-mentioned gifts are *good* and *perfect*, so also are all the others, which God bestows upon the sinful sons of Adam; for a *good* and *perfect* God, can never give any thing bad and imperfect; whether we conceive of the gifts of nature, providence, or grace. But let us proceed,

III. To observe from *Whence*, and from *Where* they come. And my text tells us they come

1. *From above*—not from a man's self, nor from beneath, but from Heaven, for in this sense it may be said, that a man can receive nothing except it be *given* him from *Heaven*. John iii. 27. And the strongest, and most gifted christian upon the earth,

earth, is constrained to say with the Apostle, *by the grace of God, I am what I am.* 1 Cor. xv. 10.—
But we are told also,

2. *From whom they come*—namely, from the Father, or author of lights. Now God may be called the author of lights, because he is the author

Of corporal light, Gen. i. 3.

Of the light of nature, John i. 4.

Of the light of grace, Psal. lxxxix. 15. and

Of the light of glory. Col. i. 12.

But we are informed also in this text,

3. That with him there is no *variableness*, neither shadow of turning. Blessed be God for that, for if so, there is no *variableness*,

1. In his love, power, nor faithfulness.—Neither is there any *variableness*

2. In his *purposes* nor *promises*, for they ever remain the same;—nor is there any *variableness*

3. In his *way of salvation*, any more than there is

4. In his *gifts* and *callings*, which the Apostle tells us, are without repentance: (Rom. xi. 29.) Agreeable to which it is said, I am the Lord, *I change not*; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Mal. iii. 6.

SERMON XL.

2 Samuel xix. 28.

For all of my Father's house were but dead men before my Lord the King; yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thy table.—

THE occasion of these words being introduced is as follows—Mephibotheth the grandson of

Saul, went down to Jerusalem to meet King David. And the King said unto him, wherefore wentest thou not with me Mephibosheth? And he answered the King, my servant deceived me, that is to say, in not saddling him the ass according to his orders, and which he required because of his lameness—and Mephibosheth's servant (we are informed) not only disobeyed his master's orders, but slandered him also unto the King by suggesting, that he stayed in Jerusalem for other purposes—but Mephibosheth said, (throwing himself upon the goodness and mercy of the King) but my Lord the King is as an angel of God, do therefore what is good in thine eyes; which words were spoken no doubt, under a sense of the King's former kindness to him, for said he (in the words of my text) *all of my Father's house were but dead men before my Lord the King; yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table.* By accommodating these words, two things present themselves for our consideration:—I shall therefore

I. Shew in what sense all our Father's house may be said to be dead men before my Lord the King, and

II. Take notice of the *Privilege* which some of them enjoy.—We may observe,

1. That by his Father's house, the house, family, or offspring of Saul are intended; and in a spiritual point of view, will apply to the house, family, or offspring of our father *Adam*; even to all that have descended, or that shall descend from his loins by ordinary generation. Now,

2. It is said of this *house*, or family, that they were all dead men before *David* the King, that is to say, they were deserving of death, on account

of the treasonable acts of *Ishbosheth* the son of Saul, in trying to get away the Kingdom from David, and seeking his life : and with equal propriety it may be said, that all our *father Adam's* house, or offspring, are *dead men* before the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and that too, on account of their *treasonable acts* of rebellion against him : so that they may be said to be dead men both in a moral, and in a law sense. First, they are dead in a moral sense. Accordingly the Apostle told the Ephesians, *you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.* Eph. ii. 1. They like *all our father's house*, were dead to God, and to every thing that is good, which was manifested by their *ignorance, inactivity, and helplessness.* They were ignorant of God, having no experimental knowledge of, or communion with him—they were ignorant of his law, and thought it would be satisfied with a partial obedience thereto.—And all our father's house, or family, are by nature ignorant of *themselves*, and imagine their hearts to be good, when in fact they are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: (Jer. xvii. 9.) They suppose their works will recommend them to God, though the Apostle says, they who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom. viii. 8. They are:

Ignorant of *Christ*,
 Ignorant of the *Gospel plan*,
 Ignorant of its *blessings*, and
 Ignorant of the *Spirit's operation.*

But this death is manifested also,

3. By their *inactivity*, not in the ways of sin observe, but in the service of God; which to every dead sinner is a great burden. It is manifested moreover by their *helplessness*, they having no more power to deliver themselves from this death, than a man has to quicken his body after his soul

soul is departed from it.—But secondly, all our father's house are dead men before the King of kings, in a *law sense* likewise; the transgression of which, not only brought death upon our bodies, but have rendered us obnoxious also, to eternal damnation; for cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law to do them; Gal. iii. 10. and the same Apostle tells us also, that *the wages of sin is death*, Rom vi. 23. not only the death of the *body*, but that also, which the scripture calls, *the second death*. Rev. xx. 14. But let us proceed,

II. To take notice of the *Privilege* which *some* of them enjoy.

For it is said in my text, yet didst thou set thy *servant* among them that did eat at thy table; this was a privilege which he had no right to expect, on account of his being a branch of a family, who were guilty of high treason.—And this part of our subject also, well applies to the guilty family of Adam; all of whom have been guilty of *high treason* against the King of kings, by *violating his Person*, setting aside his *Government*, and trampling under-foot his *Laws*; and that any of them are noticed by him, is a *privilege* which they had no right to expect: But notwithstanding they had no right to expect it, yet we find some of them enjoyed it.—For, wonderful to tell!

I. The King against whom we have rebelled, has furnished a table in the gospel, with the most nourishing and soul-reviving food; therefore it is said of wisdom, (or Christ) *she hath also furnished her table*: Prov. ix. 2. And those who are the objects of God's love, he quickens in effectual calling, and they become from that time the *willing* servants of the King of kings: He

then creates in them an appetite for the food, with which his table is so bountifully spread; and gives them faith as a hand to lay hold thereof, to the comfort of their hungry souls.—But,

2. They delight also in drawing nigh to the *table of the Lord*, (1 Cor. x. 21.) to commemorate his dying love; in the use of which ordinance, their hungry souls are often refreshed, and thus are they honoured with eating at the King's own table, against whom they have so often rebelled.—And this is not all; for

3. Every servant of the Lord shall be permitted also to eat at his table in glory; therefore it is said of his own Disciples, I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may *eat and drink* at my table in my kingdom; (Luke xxii. 29, 30.) that is, in his *kingdom of glory*.—And here we may observe also,

4. That it is the *King's table* at which they eat, and this is true, whether we take into our view the table spread in the gospel, the table of the Lord, to which his servants come to commemorate his dying love; or that table at which the Saints enjoy feast, for each may be called the *King's table*; seeing he prepares it, and having prepared his guests, by quickening their souls, and by giving them an appetite for the food; he then says to them, eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. Song. v. i. From whence we may see, that the persons whom my Lord the King invites are not his *enemies*, but his *beloved friends*; that is, those who were made so, in the work of regeneration.

Before we dismiss the subject, it may not be improper to remark,

That the reason why *Mephibosheth*, was distinguished

tinguished above the rest of Saul's family was, on account of the *oath* which was between Jonathan and David; 2 Sam. xxi. 7. and it is more than probable, that Mephibosheth did not know it; but be that as it may, we know that many of God's children feast (at first) on his bounty, without knowing the real cause thereof, but vainly imagining that it is, because they have complied with certain *terms* and *conditions*, whereas it is entirely on the account of a prior engagement, between that heavenly Father, and his Son Jesus Christ; in whom grace was given them, before the world began. 2 Tim. i. 9.—We may remark also,

6. That David's former kindness to *Mephibosheth*, encouraged him to cast himself on his mercy for the future; and in like manner should every christian be encouraged, from a consideration of what the Lord hath done for him *formerly*; to cast his soul upon him for what he may want in *future*.

SERMON XL.

Psalm lxxv. 4.

Blessed is the man whom thou choicest, and thy way approach unto thee.—

DAVID begins this psalm with an address to God saying, *praise waiteth for thee, O God, Zion*, that is to say, in his Church; and *unto thee shall the vow be performed*, agreeable to what we find in the 13th and 14th verses of the sixty-sixth psalm.—He then addresses God, as a God heard in prayer, and says, *unto thee shall all flesh come*, that is, men of all nations, and of every rank and

gree, who are feelingly sensible of the want of those blessings, which God hath to bestow upon such; they shall come to the *throne of grace*, through Jesus the mediator between God and man.--He then complains of the *prevalence of his corruptions*; but comforts himself and others with the consideration, that *Jesus should purge away their transgressions*, which the Apostle tells us, he hath done by the *sacrifice of himself*, (Heb. ix. 26.) and therefore says David, in the words of my text, *blessed is the man whom thou chooshest, and causest to approach unto thee*.--Which words contain two things for our consideration, namely,

- I. The *Man*, and
- II. His *Blessedness*.

First, with regard to the *Man*, he is described as one whom the *Lord chooses*--and *causes to approach unto him*; to each of these, let us attend in their order.

1. Sometimes by the word *choice* or *chosen*, we are to understand, *God's choosing a people to certain privileges*. Accordingly we find Moses telling the children of Israel, the Lord thy God hath *chosen thee* to be a *special people* unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth; (Deut. vi. 6.) and indeed, no people in the world were so peculiarly favoured with external privileges, as Israel were, as appears by the Apostle's expression in Romans ix. 4, 5.--But,

2. Sometimes by the term *chosen*, we are to understand, *God's choosing a person to office capacity*. This appears to me, to be the meaning of our Lord's words in John vi. 70. where he says, *have I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil?* from which words we may learn, that a man may be

be chosen to an office (as Judas was) and yet not be chosen, either to *grace* here, or *glory* hereafter, as appears by this traitor Judas, who is called in John xvii. 12. *the son of perdition*.—But,

3. Sometimes by this term *chosen* we are to understand, *God's sovereign and eternal choice of his people to salvation*. Accordingly the Apostle tells us, that *God hath chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of the world*; (Eph. i. 4.) and in his Epistle to the Thessalonians we are informed, that this *choice* is to *salvation*, 2 Thes. ii. 13. which clearly shews, that without this eternal choice, there could have been no salvation for any of the sinful sons and daughters of Adam.—But again,

4. Sometimes by the term *chosen*, we are to understand thereby, *God's choosing his people out from among the men of the world, in effectual calling*. This I presume is the meaning of our Lord's words in John xv. 19. where he tells his Disciples, *if ye were of the world, the world would love him; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you*.—Now, by *Christ's choosing them out of the world*, is evidently meant, his separating them from among the men of the world, in effectual calling, when by so doing, he *causes them to approach unto him*.—From whence we may learn,

5. That all God's chosen and redeemed people are in a state of alienation from him by nature, as well as others; but in virtue of the atonement of Christ, the Spirit of God draws the souls of his people into fellowship and communion with himself; for the Apostle John says, *truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son*, (1 John i. 3.) as it is also, *with the Holy Ghost*; which appears clearly from the 2d Corinthians xiii. 14. where the Apostle

Apostle says, *and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen.*

6. These are caused or constrained to approach unto God at a throne of grace, under a sense of their *lost, guilty, helpless, and undone* state, both by nature and practice; with whom they wrestle in prayer for a discovery of *God's pardoning love*, to their souls, as well as for *supplies of grace*, to enable them to conquer their enemies, and to persevere in the ways of God, to his glory and to their souls comfort. Such will be caused to approach unto God, not only in *public*, but in *private*, not only in *adversity*, but also in *prosperity*; and this will be the conduct and practice of all those, who are chosen in Christ to salvation, and who in consequence thereof are chosen out of the world, or from among the men of it, in effectual calling.

Let us consider,

I. *The Man's Blessedness*—under which head may observe,

1. He is blessed with a freedom from the charge, that being put to the account of his surety in Christ. Agreeable to which idea, the Apostle says, *blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin*, Rom. iv. 8. for as he is free from the charge of sin, so he is also from its punishment, because where no charge of sin is, no punishment can be inflicted.—But he is blessed also,

2. With a perfect and complete righteousness, in which he stands completely justified before God. Before the same Apostle tells us, *blessed is the man whom God imputeth righteousness*, Rom. x. 4. because every such man is free from every accusation, which might otherwise come against him from a broken law. Accordingly the Apostle

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posible tells us, *there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus*; and that *nothing can be laid to their charge*; Rom. viii. 1, 33 and surely they must be a blessed people indeed.

We may observe again, that all whom God chooseth out of the world in effectual calling are blessed,

3. With a *title to glory*, for they are the sons and children of God, both

By adoption, Ephes. i. 5.

And birth, 1 Pet. i. 23.

and if children, (says the Apostle) *then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*, Rom. viii. 17. From whence we may learn, that our *possession*, is that only, is our *title to glory*.—But,

4. Such are blessed also, with a *meetness for glory* or with a capacity to hold communion with God here, and to *enjoy* him hereafter. Agreeable to which the Apostle is found, giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet (or fit) to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. Col. i. 12. Mark reader, as this text informs us, that there is an *inheritance* for all God's children, so it informs us also of a *meetness*, which must be wrought in them before they can enjoy it, which undoubtedly includes the work of grace in the heart, without which, no man hath a capacity for the enjoyment of God. This may our Lord say to Nicodemus, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John iii. 3. And all those, who are thus blessed with a *title to*, and *meetness for glory*, shall be blessed in God's due time,

5. With the *full enjoyment* of it, for those whom God gives *grace*, he always gives *glory*; he withholds no good thing (by the way) which they stand in need of. Psal. lxxxiv. 11. From consideration

considerations it appears, that blessed is the man whom the Lord chooseth, and causeth to approach unto him, for such *shall dwell in his courts, and be satisfied with the goodness of his house* here, (verse 4th) as well as praise him at his own right hand for ever hereafter.

SERMON XLII.

Isaiah xxvii. 13.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come, which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

THIS chapter sets forth the happy state of the Church in the last times, together with its pitifulness under the care and protection of the Lord, as it does also, his affectionate regard for it. It points-out likewise its peace, prosperity and flourishing condition, as well as the ruin and destruction of its enemies.—It then informs us of a great gathering of the Lord's people by the ministry of the gospel; for it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come, which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.—Now, however these words may refer to the Lord's gathering in of his people among the Jews in the latter days; yet we shall find them equally applicable to his people in these present times.—Let us therefore enquire,

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I. What

- I. What we are to understand by the *given Trumpet*.
- II. Take notice of what is said of it, namely, that it shall be blown : and
- III. Attend to the blessed Effects thereof.

First, with regard to the *Trumpet* mentioned in my text, we are doubtless to understand thereby the ever blessed gospel of Jesus Christ, called a trumpet in allusion to those which were ordered by Moses in Numbers x. 2. and which were emblematical of the gospel

1. As to their *make*, for the Lord said unto Moses, make thee two trumpets of silver, of a single piece shalt thou make them ; from whence we may learn the true nature of the gospel of Christ, it is all of one uniform piece, that is to say of salvation, from *first to last*, by free and sovereign grace. Agreeable to which idea the Apostle says, our word (or preaching) toward you, was not yea and nay (2 Cor. i. 18.) that is, it was not sometimes salvation by grace, and at other times salvation by works, they did not contradict in one part of their discourses what they had asserted in the other ; but as they began with salvation by grace, so also they ended with it, and thus it became all yea, to the glory of God. But these trumpets were an emblem of the gospel also

2. As to their *use* ; for the above-mentioned text in Numbers informs us, that they were used for the *calling of the assembly*--and of the same use also is the gospel of Christ, namely, to call together the various congregations in the different places of worship ; that they may hear pointed out to them, the way of life and salvation by Jesus Christ, through free and sovereign grace ; for which purpose

gospel, Christ commissioned his Disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; Mark xvi. 15. that is, in the presence of all that would come to hear them.

3. We may observe again, as these *trumpets* were an emblem of the *gospel*, so also were those who were appointed to blow them, an emblem of gospel ministers; for we are told, that the sons of Aaron the *priests* shall blow with the trumpets, (Num. x. viii.) and none else had a right to do it.— So also we may observe, that none but those who are made ministers by the Lord, and are by him qualified and appointed for the work, have any right to blow the gospel trumpet; and if they do, the Lord will address them with, who hath required this at your hands? *Isai. i. 12.*

4. But the *Trumpet* in my text is called a *great* one, and which also is an emblem of the *gospel of Christ*; not only because of its *author*, who is the great God; Rom. i. 1. but also, because it is,

The effect of great love, 1 John iv. 10.

The produce of great wisdom, 1 Cor. i. 24.

It proclaims great blessings, Col. i. 12,—14.

It is attended with great power, Acts ii. 41.

And produces great effects on the mind, Acts xvii. 6.—

This leads me,

II. To take notice of what is said of it. My text tells us, it *shall be blown*, and that too in spite of all the opposition with which it may meet, either from *Satan*, or from any of his *servants*.— This gospel trumpet was blown,

1. By the *Prophets of old*, all of whom more or less pointed, or directed their hearers to Christ who was to come,

For pardon, Isai. xliii. 25.

For righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6.

For grace and glory. Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

It was blown likewise,

2. By *Christ himself*, which appears clear from his own words, where he says, the spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised: Luke iv. 18. It was blown also,

3. By the *Apostles of Christ*, whom he qualified and sent into the world for that purpose, and of whom it is said, that they went every where, preaching the word. Acts viii. 4.—And,

4. This *gospel Trumpet* has been, and will be blown, by all the succeeding ministers of the gospel, who are Men of knowledge, strength and courage. In consequence of which it is, that they are not ashamed to blow it *publicly*; for says the Apostle, I have taught you publicly, and from house to house: (Acts xx. 20.) He not only disputed with the Jews in the Synagogue, but also in the public market. Acts xvii. 17.

5. And as they blew this trumpet *publicly*, also they blew it *musically*; there is a sweet harmony to be discovered in the truths of the everlasting gospel, and whosoever embrace them, and set them forth in a clear and experimental manner, will make such music in so doing, that the hearts of those, who are convinced of their lost state, will dance for joy when they hear them: this is verily in the case of the Eunuch, of whom it is said, that he had heard, and embraced the gospel as preached

Philip, he went on his way rejoicing : Acts viii.

39. Therefore God's ministers blow this trumpet

6. *Successfully.* This appears plain, not only from the case of *Philip* above-mentioned ; but also from that of *Peter*, who while he was *blowing* this gospel trumpet, found no less than *three thousand* people, who were pricked in the heart, and were added to the Church the same day. Acts ii. 37,—41. And blessed be God, his faithful ministers in these our days, do not labour in vain, nor spend their strength for nought.—But this leads me,

III. To attend to the blessed Effects of blowing this great Trumpet,—and my text tells me,

1. *They shall come who are ready to perish.*—Now all men by nature are in a perishing state and condition, but all men do not know, or feel it ; but those who feel themselves in this state, are the persons to whom my text alludes. And this is the case with all those who are quickened by the Spirit of God ; for having a sight and sense of their sinfulness, both by nature and practice, and also of their utter inability to help themselves ; they are apprehensive that their destruction is near : But says my text, *they shall come*, that is, (under the guidance of the Spirit of God) they shall come to Christ,

For righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30.

For pardon, 1 John i. 7.

For peace, John xiv. 27.

And for supplies of grace. Phil. iv. 19.

But my text tells us moreover,

2. That they *shall worship the Lord, in the holy mount at Jerusalem* ; that is, they shall join the Church and people of God upon earth, with whom they shall worship God in Spirit and in truth, and

and shall partake of every blessing of the gospel of peace.—And,

3. They shall at last be brought to glory. For whom he calls, them he also justifies, and whom he justifies, them he also glorifies. Rom. viii. 30. Take encouragement then, ye poor distressed and pining sinners, for Christ came into the world to save such. 1 Tim. i. 15.

SERMON XLIIII.

Acts viii. 23.

*For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness,
and in the bond of iniquity.*

IN the *fourteenth* verse of this chapter, we are informed, that when the *Apostles* who were at *Jerusalem*, heard that *Samaritania* had received the word of God, they sent unto them *Peter* and *John*, who prayed with them, that they might receive the *Holy Ghost*, for which purpose they also laid their hands on them—and when *Simon* saw that through laying on of the *Apostles'* hands, the *Holy Ghost* was given, he offered them money, (we are told) saying, give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the *Holy Ghost*.—For which *Peter* sharply reproveth him, saying, thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God, may be purchased with money; adding, thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thine heart is not right in the sight of God—for (said he in the words of my text) *I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*

In which words two things are necessary to point out, which are,

- I. This Man's *State*,—And,
- II. How it was *perceived*.

First, as to the *State* in which Simon was, is expressed by the Apostle in these words—*thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*: signifying no doubt, that he was in a *state of nature*, and under the power and dominion of sin, as appears by his *covetousness, ambition, and hypocrisy*, which led him to make such an unbecoming and unwarrantable request, in trying to procure the power of communicating the Holy Ghost, on whomsoever he should lay his hands. Let it be observed,

That a state of nature, is called by the Apostle, a state of *bitterness*, and this (no doubt) in allusion to Deuteronomy xxxii. 32. where the Lord says, when speaking of the wicked, and of the fruit which they brought forth, *their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah, the grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter*, and in Jeremiah ii. 19. we are told, that it is an evil thing and *bitter*, that thou should'st forget the Lord thy God. We may observe also, that the Apostle Paul, when speaking of the wicked, says, *their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness*, (Rom. iii. 14.) and the Psalmist also tells us, that the wicked whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows, to shoot their arrows, *even bitter words*. Psalm. lxi. 3.

Let it be remembered brethren, that sin is

1. *To God*, which evidently appears by the *bit-ter sufferings* which he inflicted on Christ, as his people's

people's surety, who had all their sins transferred to his account, for the Father laid on Christ, the iniquities of them all. *Isai. liii. 6.* So bitter were the sufferings of Christ on account of the sins of his people, that he cried out, saying, *my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,* *Matt. xxvi. 38.* In short, he endured the whole of God's wrath which they had deserved, in order that they might be delivered from wrath to come; (*1 Thes. i. 10.*) and thus did Jesus taste the bitterness of sin. But sin is bitter also,

2. To every good man, which is found to be so, under their first awakenings by the Spirit of God; it causes them much bitter remorse on the account thereof, they like Peter of old, frequently weep bitterly, under the guilt of it, *Matt. xxvi. 75.* and have many bitter reflections pass through their minds, when they think of their base conduct in sinning against so good, and gracious a God.— Their in-bred corruptions, as well as outward acts of sin, will be found bitter to them, all the while they are in this world; and under which they will be brought to lament bitterly with the apostle, saying, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? *Rom. vii. 24.*—But sin will be found bitter likewise,

3. To the impenitently wicked, for such will have to endure the bitter wrath of God for ever, in that place where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, (*Mark ix. 44.*) where the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and where they will have no rest day nor night. *Rev. xiv. 11.* From these considerations the bitterness of sin may in some measure be covered.

4. But this Man's state is farther described,

his being in *the bond of iniquity*.—Agreeable to which idea, the wise man when speaking of the wicked, says, *he shall be holden with the cords of his sins*. Prov. v. 22. From whence we may see, that this *bond of iniquity* is a very *strong one*, so strong indeed is this bond, that none can loose himself from it—and as it is a strong bond, so also it is a *reproachful one*, for the wise man tells us, that *sin is a reproach to any people*; Prov. xiv. 34. and as it is a reproachful bond, so also it is an *unprofitable one*; for much may be lost by it, but nothing can be gained thereby. This then was the state of *Simon*, and this too is the state of every man, who (as *Simon* was) is destitute of the grace of God.—But let us proceed to point out,

II. How it was *perceived*.—Under which head we may observe,

1. That our Lord lays down a rule, whereby this matter may be determined, where he says, *the tree is known by its fruit*.—And also, where he informs us, that *an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things*; Matt. xii. 33, 35; therefore, if the general deportment of a man be *evil or sinful*, it proves clearly, that he is an *evil man*, and that the treasure of his heart is *evil* also. But to be more particular, a man's state may be perceived, or discerned,

2. By his *ignorance of divine things*. This no doubt was what the Apostle judged by, respecting the state of *Simon*, and which he might do, with some degree of certainty, for had not *Simon* been a man ignorant of divine things, he would never have offered to purchase the gift of God with money; and equally as ignorant are all those, who think of procuring the favour of God, and the other blessings which they want at the price of their own doings.

doings. But a man's state may be perceived & discovered moreover,

3. By the *company which he keeps*, if a man therefore turn his back upon God's people, and habitually associate with the men of the world, who are enemies to God; it plainly proves, that his mind is carnal, and that he is in the state mentioned in my text, namely, in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity; for were it not so, he would come out from among the unconverted part of the world, and associate with the people of God, with profit, pleasure, and delight,

But again, this *Man's state* may be perceived also,

4. By the *books which he reads*--for although the real christian can say with David, thy words are sweeter to me than honey to my mouth. (Ps. cxix. 103.) yet the man who is in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, finds much more delight in reading a play, a novel, or books of obscenity, than he does in reading or searching the scriptures according to Christ's command, who has expressly said, *search the scriptures*. John v. 39. But this *carnal man's state* may be perceived likewise, by men of spiritual understanding;

5. By *his places of resort*, therefore, if you want a man of the above description, you may find him at a playhouse, at a horserace, at a ball, or an assembly; at a card rout, at the pleasure gardens, or some other place of diversion and sinful amusement; but let it be remembered, that those who delight in these places are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity; as in short, are all those who are not born again, and if they continue to live after the flesh, they shall die eternally. Rom. viii. 13.

S E R M O N XLIV.

Zechariah x. 8.

I will hiss for them, and gather them: for I have redeemed them.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, after the influx of the Gentiles is brought in--in the verses that precede my text, the vanity of Idols and of Idolatry is exposed--they then informs us of God's anger against the shepherds, and of punishment being visited upon the goats--then follows an account of the gracious visitation of the people of the Jews, in whom the Messiah sprang--after which we have various promises relative to them, and in the words of my text it is said--I will hiss for them, and gather them: for I have redeemed them.--By perverting the order of the words, three things present themselves for our consideration;

- I. The *Persons*—the redeemed,
- II. The *Promise*—I will gather them, and
- III. The *Mean* to be made use of—I will hiss for them.

First, with regard to the *Persons* mentioned in the text, they are the redeemed of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that too, in consequence of God's everlasting love towards them, for had they not been loved of the Father, they would never have been given to Christ, in order to be redeemed by him.—Now be it remembered, brethren, that Christ hath redeemed, or delivered all his people,

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1. From

1. From the *law's curse*, this is a glorious truth, not only believed by the Apostle Paul, but expressed by him, his words are, *Christ hath redeemed us (his people) from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: Gal. iii. 13.* Mark my brethren, the Apostle tells the Churches at Galatia, that Christ *had* redeemed, or delivered them from the curse of the law—and he tells them also how this was done, namely, by being made a curse for them, and if Christ by being made a curse for his people, hath delivered them from the curse of the law; it is utterly impossible that the curse of the law should ever fall upon them, for if it were not so, wherein would appear the deliverance, of which the Apostle speaks in the above-mentioned text?—But as Christ has delivered his people from the law's curse, so also hath he delivered them,

2. From *all iniquity*. This may be gathered from the same Apostle's writing, where he says (Christ) gave himself for us, (that is, God's elect) as mentioned in the first verse of this epistle) and he might redeem us (the elect) from *all iniquity* and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Tit. ii. 14. How clearly, my brethren, has the Apostle expressed himself in this text; he tells us first, *that* Christ gave himself for us—he then informs us, *what* Christ gave himself for, namely, to redeem us from *all iniquity*, that is, from the punishment, both of original and actual transgression; and *to purify unto himself a peculiar people*, (mark the expression brethren) Christ did not give himself to redeem and purify unto himself all people; but to redeem and purify unto himself a *peculiar people*—after which works of purification, they become *zealous of (or to) good works*. So that upon the whole we may observe that Christ first redeems, or delivers his people from

the punishment of sin, and then purifies them by the Spirit, and that makes them *zealous of good works*. Therefore no man is delivered from punishment because he is purified, or sanctified, and becomes zealous of good works, but he is sanctified and becomes zealous of good works, because he is redeemed by Christ.—But we are told moreover by this same Apostle in 1 Thes. i. 10.

3. That *Christ hath delivered us*, (that is, the sinner, as in verse the 4th of this epistle) *from wrath to come*; and therefore it is impossible that any of our people should suffer the *wrath of God*, which is due for sin; for the Apostle tells us in plain words, and in the most unequivocal manner, that Christ *hath delivered them from it*: and in short, this redemption is a redemption, or deliverance out of the hand of all our enemies, that we might serve God without fear, (or dread) in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. Luke xi. 74, 75. From which passage we may learn, that men do not serve God in holiness and righteousness, in order to be delivered from the hand of their enemies; but they are first delivered out of the hand of their enemies, and then are enabled to serve God, in holiness and righteousness before him, as above observed.—But this leads me,

II. To the *Promise*—I will gather them—this promises,

1. That the redeemed are by nature in a *scattered* state, or in a state of alienation from God, which is certainly a very great truth, both known and lamented by all those who are called by grace: we can say with the Prophet, all we like sheep are gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way. Isa. liii. 6. Mark, my brethren, how total is the departure—*all we like sheep have gone*

gone astray, that is, from God, his people, his law and ordinances—take notice also, into what way we have turned, we have turned every one to his own way; which is,

A sinful way,
A God-dishonouring
And a Soul-distressing way.—But

2. The Lord says, when speaking of his redeemed ones, I will gather them—I will say to the north, give up; and to the south, keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: *Isai. xliii. 6.* Agreeable to which we are informed, *Caiaphas* prophesied, that Jesus should die for that nation; (that is, his own people among the Jews) and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one, (that is, in one body) the children of God that were scattered abroad, (*John xi. 51, 52.*) that is, his own people among the Gentiles, who were then in a scattered state and condition, as well as those among the Jews: so that at length there shall be one flock, under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

3. Now this work is accomplished in regeneration, at which time they are gathered to Christ for life and salvation—they are gathered, or folded together in Church-fellowship—and shall by and by be gathered as wheat into the garner, (*Matt. iii. 12.*) to praise God and the Lamb for ever and ever, with the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven. *Heb. xii. 23.*—But let us proceed,

III. To the *Mean* to be made use of: the Lord tells us in my text, *I will hiss for them*, that is, I will call for them. This I presume is the meaning of the word *hiss*, in *Isaiah's* prophecy, where

The Lord says, I will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and I will hiss (or call) unto them from the end of the earth. (Isai. v. 26. see also Isai. xli. 18.) The allusion is, to shepherds using a whistle to call the flocks together, and thus it is, that the great shepherd of the sheep Jesus Christ, calls and gathers together his flock, even by causing to be preached the ever blessed gospel, in the hearing of his sheep, these are brought to know, love, and embrace the gospel, and partake of the blessings exhibited therein. This is to them a *pleasing, charming voice*, because it is a voice of *love and mercy*.—The Redeemer hissed or called for his people,

1. By the *Prophets* of old, as he did also by John the Baptist.

2. He hissed for them himself when here upon earth.

3. He hissed for them by the *Apostles*, as he does so by his *ministers* in this our day. But why does he thus hiss (or call) for, and gather them? my text tells us, for, or because I have redeemed them: hence we may learn, that all the redeemed, shall be called and gathered together by the Lord.

SERMON XLV.

Psalms xxvii. 14.

Be in the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.

DAVID begins this psalm by expressing his confidence in God, saying, the Lord is my light and my salvation—the Lord (says he) is the strength of my life: and so necessary and comfortable did David find the presence of the Lord, that in the

9th verse of this psalm he prays unto him, saying, leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of salvation. In the following verses we find, that from a sense of his ignorance, he prays unto God to be taught—and from a sense of his weakness, he applies unto him for deliverance from the hands of his enemies, who breathed out cruelty against him:—In which trying circumstance he tells us, I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord, in the land of the living; a hint of whose goodness constrained him to say for the encouragement of others;—wait on the Lord; be of good courage; and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say on the Lord.—In these words are contained two things,

- I. An *Exhortation*, and
- II. An *Affirmation*.

First, as to the *Exhortation*, two things are contained therein, which are,

Wait on the Lord,
Be of good courage.

Wait on the Lord.—It is undoubtedly the duty as well as the *privilege* of all the children of God to wait upon him, not only in private, but also in all the public means of grace, or in his house and assemblies:—And which they ought to do,

1. As *servants* wait upon their *masters*. Agreeable to which idea the psalmist says, behold, as the eyes of *servants* look unto the hand of their *master*, and as the eyes of a *maiden* unto the hand of her *mistress*; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God until that he have mercy upon us. Psal. cxlii. Thus then did David, and thus does every child of God wait upon him for that mercy, which they sinners stand in need of. But they should wait upon him likewise,

2. As *biggars* upon their *benefactors*, with expectation of receiving what they petition for at their hands. Thus it was with blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, who sat by the highway-side begging: (Mark x. 46.) he not only asked, but waited with expectation, to receive a supply from his benefactors: and so it should be also, with the children of God; they should not only *ask*, but wait patiently upon the Lord, their bountiful benefactor, for a supply of all their wants, remembering that he hath said, *ask, and it shall be given*: (Matt. vii. 7.) and that it is he, who raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill. 1 Sam. ii. 8.
 that they should wait upon him also,

3. As *children* upon their *parents*; that is, *obediently*; for the Apostle says, *children obey your parents in the Lord*: Eph. vi. 1. and thus also it is, for God's children ought to wait upon him in all appointed means of grace, in obedience to what he, their heavenly Father hath commanded them.—They have to wait upon moreover,

4. For *light in darkness*; for David tells us, that it is *given for the righteous*, (Psal. xcvi. 11.) of which he himself was a witness, when he said, *the Lord is my light and my salvation*. Psal. cxviii. 1. and as they wait upon him for light in darkness, so,

5. They wait upon him for *strength in weakness*; and for their encouragement in so doing, they are told, *he (God) giveth power to the faint, to them that have no might he increaseth strength*: Psal. xl. 29. they therefore, that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength. Isai. xl. 31. But take notice also of the *absolute* nature of the promise,

promise, *they shall renew their strength*.—But we have to wait upon him also,

6. For *deliverance* from all our enemies, which we have a right to expect, since the intent of Christ's coming into this world was, that his people might be saved from their enemies, and from the hand of all that hate them; in order that they might serve God without (a slavish) fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of their lives. Luke i. 71,—75.
But they are exhorted—

Secondly, to be of good courage, notwithstanding
The number of their enemies,
The power of their enemies, and
The policy of them.—For they have,

1. A *good Father*, one who is rich unto all that call upon him : Rom. x. 12.

2. They have a *good Saviour*, who is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them : Heb. vii. 25.

3. They have a *good guide*, namely, the Spirit of the Lord, who is engaged to lead and guide them into all truth : John xvi. 13.—And,

4. They are engaged in a *good cause*, namely, the cause of God and truth, and are sure of victory, because the Lord fighteth for them : Isa. xiv. 14. a sense of which truths made David *be of good courage*.—Proceed we now,

II. To the *Affirmation* :—which is contained in these words,—*and he shall strengthen their hands*. Agreeable to what is expressed in Isaiah's Prophecy, where the Lord says, fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God:

He strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness. Isa. xli. 10. Oh! what a cluster of sweet promises does this verse contain, for the encouragement of all God's people, who have a feeling sense of their own *weakness*. But let us enquire for a few minutes, how it is that the Lord strengthens the hearts of his people:—and we shall find that he does it,

1. By *increasing their faith*, for in proportion to the strength of their faith, so their comforts will be, and their hearts encouraged and strengthened accordingly. Hence appears the necessity of *waiting upon the Lord*, both in public and private, and their crying with the Apostles of old, *Lord, increase our faith.* Luke xvii. 5.

2. By the comforts the hearts of his people, by the application of his *promises*, for there are many promises unto them, *great and precious promises*: (2 Pet. i. 4.) and when the Lord is pleased to open their understandings, to give them to see their excellency and suitableness, and to enable them by that to rely upon the faithfulness of God in the promise; their drooping spirits revive, and their hearts become strengthened thereby.

But we may observe again, that the Lord sometimes strengthens the hearts of his people,

3. By the *discoveries of his love*, for he hath promised to manifest himself unto them, John xiv. 21. It is, to make known himself as a God of love, Christ to their souls, than which, nothing will strengthen the hearts of God's people more: for never faint and weak they may be from a sense of their *sinfulness* and *insufficiency*; as soon as the Lord reveals to them a sense of his *pardonning love*, and gives them to see that they are *accepted* in the beloved;

beloved; their hearts then become strengthened and they revive again: and, mark here brethren, that the Psalmist repeats the former part of his exhortation, saying, *wait, I say, on the Lord*; and the he does to express the importance of this duty, and the necessity there is of attending thereto, both for God's glory, and for our own good.

SERMON XLVI.

1 Timothy iv. 10.

Therefore we labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

THESE words are said by some to contain express terms, the doctrine of general salvation; but whether that be a truth or not, will be seen I presume, in the sequel of this discourse; for if this passage contain the doctrine of general redemption, I am greatly mistaking if it do not contain more than those who hold that doctrine, wish it to contain, that is to say, *universal salvation*. But let us proceed to examine the passage, and for the sake of order, let us take notice,

- I. Of what the Apostle laboured under and suffered, and
- II. Consider the Cause thereof.

First then, we are to take notice of what the Apostle laboured under and suffered. — And here let it be observed, that he laboured under,

1. Stripes and imprisonment, while he laboured

propagating the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ; for he tells us in one of his Epistles to the Corinthians, that he was in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, and in prisons more frequent, 2 Cor. xi. 23, 24. from which allage it evidently appears, in some measure, that the Apostle laboured under: but even these did not abate his love to, and zeal for God; for he well knew that he was able to preserve him in the midst of danger, and that he would preserve him, for the Lord had told him, that he would be with him, and that no one should set on him to hurt him. Acts xviii. 10.—But,

2. He laboured under *weariness* and *painfulness*, watchings, hunger, and thirst, as well as cold and sickness: 2 Cor. xi. 27. he laboured also under the *rage* of his *persecutors*, which ran to such a height at one time, that they laid wait to kill him: Acts ix. 23, 24. For the Jews banded together, bound themselves under a curse, saying, they would neither eat nor drink, till they had killed him: Acts xxiii. 12. And thus it was brethren, that the Apostle laboured.

It then it is said moreover,

3. That he *suffered reproach*: they that were enemies to God, reproached and vilified the character of this good man, in order to spoil his usefulness, and disgrace that cause in which he was engaged; to prevent, if possible, the people from embracing his doctrine. Thus we find that the Apostle Paul *suffered reproach*; for some of the Philosophers at one time called out to him and said, *what dost thou babble say?* Acts xvii. 18. And at another time we are told, that Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself, much learning hath made thee mad. Acts xxvi. 24. Hence then we find, that Paul was reproached at one time as

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a babbler, and at another time as a madman; and reproach has been the lot, more or less, of all the ministers of God, down to the present time.— But this leads me,

II. To consider the *Cause* thereof, and the Apostle tells us, it was because he *trusted* in the *living God*, he found therefore Christ's words true; who told his Disciples, *because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* John iii. 19.—Now you have to observe here brethren,

I. That not Christ, but *God the Father*, is intended in this text by the *living God*; agreeable to which idea, Christ told the Jews, as the *living Father* hath sent me, and I live by the Father; (that is as man) so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me, here the Apostle calls him the *living Father* in opposition (no doubt) to lifeless idols, in which some trusted. This living God may be so called because he has life in himself, and is the author and giver

Of natural, Acts xvii. 25.

Of spiritual, Eph. ii. 1. and

Of eternal life to others. 1 John v. 11.

Now it is said—

2. That he *trusted* in this living God, that is for the accomplishment of the promises which he has made to his people, both respecting this life, and that which is to come; for godliness has the promise of both, as appears by the 8th verse of this chapter, out of which my text is taken. He therefore *trusted* to his *wisdom* to direct him, as well as to his *power* to protect him. But the Apostle tells us moreover,

3. That he is *the Saviour of all men*; from which words some draw an argument for universal or general redemption: but if we examine

port of this argument, we shall find that it proves too much, and an argument that proves too much, proves nothing at all to any valuable purpose; were we to understand *Christ* by the *living God* in this text, and call him the Saviour of *all men*, (that is with a spiritual salvation) the consequence would be, that all men must go to Heaven; than which nothing can be more false, for wide is the road and broad is the way, (says Christ) that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in that: Matt. vii. 13. for men therefore to hold out universal redemption, and to deny universal damnation, is absurd to the last degree; for if Christ redeemed all men, then all men must be pardoned by his blood, and justified in his righteousness, and will sooner, or later be sanctified by his Spirit; since he is engaged to regenerate, or sanctify all, whom the Father hath loved, and whom he hath redeemed. But some perhaps may say, that Christ died *intentionally* for all men; to which I reply, if all men be not saved, then, Christ must be disappointed of his intentions; but how can that happen with him who is over all God for evermore, I cannot tell, for a *disappointed* is what my bible no where speaks of: besides, if Christ died for *all men*, and some go to Hell, it argues a defect in the atonement; for if the atonement be complete, Christ when he died, fully paid off (as a surety) all the debts of those whom he died, and if he died for all men, then all men's debts must be paid, or their sins blotted out in consequence thereof: and yet according to the doctrine of universal redemption, God is required to act the part of a *dishonest* and *unjust* creditor, by punishing some in Hell, whose debts are paid by Christ, which is no other than requiring a payment for the same debt: but far be it

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from God thus to act, for he is a *just God*, as well as a *Saviour*. *Isai. xlv. 21.* Whoever therefore they are, that contend for *universal redemption*, to be consistent with themselves) should contend earnestly for *universal salvation*; but remember, reader, that neither the one nor the other, has an existence in the word of God. (see *John x. 17. Acts xx. 28. and Matt. vii. 13.*)—But,

4. When it is said, that the *living God* is the Saviour of all men, it means in a *providential* way, for as he gives life, so also he preserves it, and gives all things necessary for that purpose; in this sense therefore it is, that *the Lord is good to all*; and his *tender mercies are over all his works*, *Psal. cxi. 4.* But as my text tells us, that he is the Saviour of *all men*, (that is, in a providential way) so also it is added, *but especially of them that believe*. Hence we may learn, that as there is a general providence over all mankind, so also, there is a *special* providence over all his own beloved, chosen, redeemed and called people.

SERMON XLVII.

Luke xviii. 10.

Two men went up to the temple to pray.—

THIS chapter is introduced with a parable, which our Lord dropped with a view to encourage his Disciples to pray and not to faint; he begins it with saying, there was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:—he then goes on to inform them, that there was a widow also in the same city, who came

him, saying, avenge me of mine adversary.—Which for a while he refused to do, but at length said within himself, I will avenge her; lest by her continual coming she weary me.—Our Lord then proceeds to apply the parable, saying,—and will not God avenge his own *elect*, which cry day and night unto him? I tell you (says he) he will avenge them speedily. Having finished this; he induces another parable, with a view to reprove the proud, self-confident, and self-boasting Pharisee, and which he begins with, saying in the words of my text,—two men went up to the temple to pray.

Speaking on which words, let us take notice,

- I. Of these Men's Characters,
- II. Of their Employment, and
- III. Of What is said of them.

First, then we are to take notice of the Characters of these two men, of whom it is said, in the text out of which my text is taken, that

The one was a *Pharisee*, and

The other a *Publican*:

The former of which characters, our Lord describes in the verse which precedes that out of which my text is taken, wherein it is said, *he spake a parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.*

They trusted to the supposed goodness of their own hearts, notwithstanding the wise man saith, *whoever trusteth his own heart is a fool.* xxviii. 26.—They trusted also, to the imagined efficacy of their *own works*, as their *prayers*, *fasts* and other *religious exercises*, and *ceremonial observations*, for their justification before God; notwithstanding the Apostle says, by the deeds of

the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Rom. iii. 20. Thus *they being ignorant of God's righteousness*, (that is, of the perfections of his nature, and the requirements of his law,) and *not about to establish their own righteousness*, did not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God, (Rom. x. iii.) that is, to that righteousness which God the Father requires in his law, which God the Son wrought out, and which God the Spirit enables his people to receive by faith, and at length to rejoice in, saying, in the language of the prophet, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. Isai. xlv. 24. In short, these characters define that generation, of whom it is said, *they are proud of their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness*, Prov. xxx. 12.—But,

2. We are told, *they despised others*. This is the conduct of the pharisee alluded to in my text who proudly and vauntingly said, *I am not equal to this publican*, (verse 11.) Their temper and conduct are clearly pointed out, moreover, by the prophet Isaiah; where he represents them as thus standing by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou. But these, (says the Lord by the Prophet) are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day, Isai. lxv. 5. And whatsoever persons may think of themselves, they are offensive to God, as appears from what is said in Mark. ix. at the 33d verse of which chapter he addresses them saying, *ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell*. But let us attend now

3. To the other character, namely, the *publican*, by which we are to understand, one who was *gatherer of the Roman tax*, and all these publicans were held in great contempt among the Jews in general; and such was their prejudice against the

they not only refused to eat with such themselves, but found fault also with the conduct of Christ for so doing, for they said unto his Disciples, why eateth your master with publicans and sinners? Matt. ix. 11. Now this character, (the publican) is an emblem of every truly awakened sinner, who feels his guilt and unworthiness, and goes to God for mercy; but is frequently despised by the proud pharisee, who looks upon him with disdain, or contempt.—But let us proceed now,

II. To their *Employment*; concerning which it is said, in my text, *they went up to the temple to pray*.—We may observe,

1. They both went to the *same place*, namely, the temple, which was a place set apart for the public worship of God; and as they both went to the *same place*, so also, they were both *professedly* employed in the *same act*; for we are told, they went up to the temple to *pray*, so that we cannot know a *pharisee* from a *real christian*, merely by his *going* to the house of God, since in the *pharisee* and the *publican*, we are told, they went up to the temple to pray.—But let us proceed,

2. To examine the *matter* of their prayers. The *pharisee*, it is said, *stood and prayed thus with himself*, God I thank thee, that I am not as other men *adulterers, extortioners*, or even as *this publican*.—I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess, (verse 11, 12.) so that the substance of this man's prayer (if it may be called one) was to tell God of some of the bad things that he had been freed from, and of some of the good things which he did: all of which sprang from a proud, self-conceited spirit, and betrayed the insensibility and hypocrisy of his heart, which was deceit-

ful above all things, and desperately wicked, *lc.* xviii. 9.—But let us attend,

3. To the *matter* of the publican's prayer, for we are told, that he standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner*, (verse 13.) in which relation concerning him, we may discover that he had

A sense of his unworthiness, and

A sense of sin,

That he confessed it,

Petitioned for mercy : and

therefore though we cannot know a *pharisee* or *christian* by their *going* to the house of God, yet they may be known by their difference in the *nature* of their prayers, as they may also by the general tenor of their conversation.

But I shall proceed now,—

III. To take notice of what is said of them; it is contained in the 14th verse of this chapter, out of which my text is taken, and reads thus: I tell you, that this man went down (that is from the temple) to his own house justified, rather than (or and not) the other.

From which passage we may learn,

1. That the publican was *justified*; now to be justified is to be declared innocent, or free from condemnation: and all God's people who are regenerated by his spirit, are according to God's word justified in a threefold sense: that is to say,

Before God, in Christ's righteousness, *Rom. iv. 6.*

Before men, by their works, *James ii. 24.* and

In their own consciences, by faith: *Rom. x. 1.*

The latter of which is intended in the words of this text: therefore when it is said the publican went down to his own house *justified*, it means

that he went home from the temple, with his conscience acquitted from guilt, or freed from condemnation, which was effected in a way of believing in, or relying by faith, on the blood and righteousness of Christ for life and salvation.—But,

2. It was not so with the other, namely, the Pharisee, for he went down from the temple the same proud, boasting, self-conceited man as he went up; he was neither convinced of the sinfulness of sin, nor was his conscience justified, or acquitted from the guilt of it, as the publican's was, whom God met at the temple.

SERMON XLVIII.

Psal. lxi. 2.

When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

THIS Psalm was written (it is thought) when David fled from his son *Absalom*, and passed over to the other side of Jordan, (2 Sam. xvii. 22.) He begins it with breathing out his desires to the Lord, saying, hear my cry, O God, attend to my prayer; which evidently proves that David, in times of danger and distress, prayed unto God, as he did also at other times, and as all good men have done in every age of the world. He seems to be determined that wherever God in his providence might cast his lot, he would call upon him; for he says, from the *end of the earth* will I cry unto thee: He was so well persuaded of the *omnipresence* of God, that he well knew he could be heard by God, wherever he called upon him. He then introduces

produces the words of my text, saying, when my heart is *overwhelmed*, lead me to the rock that is *higher* than I.

In discoursing on which words—let us attend,

- I. To the *Time* spoken of, and
- II. To the *Request* made.

First, As to the *Time* spoken of by David, he tells us in my text is, *when his heart is overwhelmed*, which was sometimes the case with the Psalmist, as it is also with every other christian upon the face of the earth.

Sometimes, for instance, the christian's heart is overwhelmed,

1. With a *sense of sin*, and he can feelingly and experimentally say with David, mine *iniquities* are gone over my head, as an *heavy burden* they are too heavy for me; Psal. xxxviii. 4. or in other words to the same purpose, mine *iniquities* have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up, they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me; Psal. xl. 12, such we find was David's heart, and thus at seasons are the hearts of the rest of God's people overwhelmed with a feeling sense of the *guilt of sin*. But they are sometimes overwhelmed also in their hearts

2. With the *corruptions of their nature*, a striking instance of this we have in the experience of Saint Paul, whose words are, I find then a law (or a disposition) that when I would do good, evil is present with me, for I delight in the law of God, after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warning against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. This made the Apostle say
O wretched

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom. vii. 21, 24. From which passages it evidently appears, that Paul was *overwhelmed* or bowed down, with a fight and strife of the *corruptions* of his *nature*: and it is as vain, as it is also absurd, for any one to say that Paul was at this time a *carnal man*, for if so, how came he to *delight* in the law of God, after the *inward man*? for if Paul were at this time a carnal man, he was under the influence of a carnal mind, and the carnal mind is enmity against God: it is *not subject* to the *law of God*, neither indeed can be, Rom. viii. 7. therefore as Paul *delighted* in the law of God after the *inward man*, he must be at this time a renewed man.—And there is not (I presume) a christian upon the face of the earth, but if he read with attention this 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, he will find that his own experience will answer to Paul's, even as he answers to face in a glass.—But,

9. Sometimes the christian's heart is overwhelmed through *much darkness*, in which he is like to lament with David, saying, will the Lord cast me for ever? And will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Ps. lxxvii. 7—9. This is the language of a soul, that once enjoyed the light of God's reconciled countenance, but is now in the dark respecting that matter, on which a *restlessness* takes place in the mind, which is manifested by an enquiry after the beloved object, as was the experience of the Church in the song of Solomon, where she said, I will arise now and go about the city, in the streets and in the broad ways, I will seek him whom my soul loveth.—She moreover enquired of the watchmen, saying,

saying, saw ye him whom my soul loveth? The result of all was, we are told, that she found him whom her soul loved, she held him and would not let him go, &c. (Song iii. 1—4.) Now this is the real experience of a man who formerly enjoyed the light of God's reconciled countenance and a sense of acceptance with him, but is now overwhelmed with *darkness* through manifold temptations, 1 Pet. i. 6. or from some other cause, either known, or unknown to him: This made David say, thou didst hide thy face from me, and I was troubled.—But let us proceed as proposed,

II. To the Request made by David, which is contained in these words—*lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*—But it will be necessary to enquire,

1. What we are to understand by the rock, of which David speaks, and in doing which, we shall find no great difficulty: for doubtless, Christ is intended thereby, who is emphatically called a rock in various parts of God's word, but especially by the Apostle Paul, who, when speaking to the Jews, says, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that *spiritual rock* that followed them, and *that rock was Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 4.—Now, Christ may be compared to a rock, for

Its strength, Psal. lxxxix. 8.

Its safety, Psal. lxxi. 3.

Its usefulness, Isai. xxxii. 2.

Its durability, Heb. xiii. 8. And

Its height, Phil. ii. 9.

which made David speak of him as a rock, that was higher than *himself*, or all the kings of the earth.

He is higher in *authority*, he being the King of kings, 1 Tim. vi. 15.

He

He is higher in *power*, having all power both in Heaven and in earth, Matt. xxviii. 18.

And higher in *wisdom*, for in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii.

3.—But,

2. David requests to be *led* to this rock, which is a plain acknowledgment, or confession of his own inability, similar to that which we find in the song of Solomon, where the Church says, *draw me*, (that is as a collective body) *and we* (as individuals) *will run after thee*, Song i. 4. both which passages are a confirmation of what our Lord hath said on this subject, namely, that no man *can* come unto me, except the *Father* which hath sent me *draw* him, John vi. 44.—Therefore,

3. David being made truly sensible of this important truth, says, in the words of my text, *lead me to the rock*, that is *to Christ*—and mark my brethren, he did not make this request of a *man* like himself, nor did he apply to an *angel* on this occasion, well knowing that both these would have been unequal to the task, or unable to grant his request; therefore he wisely applied unto *God*, saying, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the *rock* that is higher than I. The import of which is, in all times of danger and distress, lead me to Christ:

Lead me

To his *life* for a *righteousness*,

To his *death* for an *atonement*,

To his *fulnes* for *fresh supplies* :

Lead me to him for *pardon*,

Lead me to him for *peace*,

Lead me to him as my *surety*,

Lead me to him as my *saviour*,

Lead me to him for all I want in time,

and for all that he has promised when time shall be no more.—And,

Thus

Thus (I presume) does every good man, under a feeling sense of his own *weakness and inability*, cry unto God, saying, with David in the words of my text, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock (that is to Christ) who is higher than I.

SERMON XLIX.

John vi. 44.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.

THE doctrine contained in this text, is a doctrine which has been opposed (more or less) in every age of the world, by those who are not feelingly sensible of their own helplessness; which is by no means to be wondered at, since it so strongly militates against the pride and vanity of the human heart. Our Lord in one of the preceding verses had been speaking of himself, as the bread which came down from Heaven; on which account, we are told that the Jews murmured; but Jesus answered and said unto them, murmur not among yourselves, for said he, (in the words of my text,) no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.

In speaking on these words, I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. What this *Coming* is,
- II. The Reason *why Men cannot come*, and
- III. The *Necessity* of God's drawing them.

First, then, I am to shew, *what* this *coming* to Christ is, which is spoken of in the text.

Under which head we may observe,

1. That the *Coming* spoken of, is not a *corporal* coming to him in order to hear him preach; for in that sense they could come to him, (as men can now, to hear his word preached) without being drawn by him, in the sense alluded to in this text: for the same legs which carry a man to the play-house, or any other place of diversion, would carry him to the house of God, were he so disposed.—

2. The *Coming* spoken of in this text, is a *coming* to Christ by faith, or a *believing in him*, as it is pressed in the 35th verse of this chapter, where the Lord says, he that *cometh* to me shall never hunger, and he that *believeth* on me shall never thirst; the latter of these clauses, (I presume) is an explanation of the former: therefore to come to Christ, is to believe in him with the heart unto righteousness, and to the saving of the soul: agreeable to what the Apostle says, with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Rom. x. 10. But men do not work out a righteousness by believing; but *in* believing, they receive that which Christ has wrought out for them, and which the Father hath imputed to them, and thus they believe to the saving of the soul: Heb. x. 39. not by their believing is that which saves them, but the object believed in, that is to say, Christ, he is the Saviour, and not their believing: for were a man to be saved *for* believing, he would be saved by work; but the Apostle says, *not of works*, lest any man should boast: Eph. ii. 9. therefore, though no man will be saved *without* believing, Mark. xvi. 7. yet no man ever was, nor ever will be saved *by* believing:—For we may observe,

T

3. That

3. That men's believing as above described, is not the cause of eternal life, but the effect of God's having ordained them thereto; agreeable to what the Apostle says, *as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*; Acts xiii. 48. that is, with the heart unto righteousness, and to the saving of their souls, as above observed.

But let us proceed to shew,

II. Why Men cannot thus (of themselves) come to Christ, for he tells us in my text, that no man can come unto me,—and mark the expression, *brethren, no man*, so that man's inability is *general*, for it cannot with propriety be said, that some men can come to Christ without being drawn, and that others cannot, for my text assures us in the most positive terms, that *no man can come*.—For,

I. Men by nature are *unable* to come; that is, in the manner above described; agreeable to which our Lord told his Disciples, *without me, ye can do nothing*; that is, nothing which is spiritually good; for says the Prophet, can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? (if so) then may ye also do good, (of yourselves) that are accustomed to do evil. Jer. xiii. 23. This passage exhibits to our view in the most striking manner, the doctrine of man's inability, which is asserted by Christ in my text, now under consideration.

But another reason why *natural men cannot come* to Christ, in the manner above described is,

2. Because they are *unwilling*, as well as *unable*. Agreeable to which, our Lord told some of the Jews, saying, *ye will not come to me, that ye may have life*; John v. 40. which passage clearly sheweth forth the depravity of man's will, nor is it in the power of all the *moral suasion* in the world, to make men willing to come to Christ for life and salvation.

tion, unless God works by his Almighty power ; therefore it is said, *thy people shall be willing*, in the day of thy power. Psal. cx. 3.

And we may observe also, that another reason why men cannot come to Christ is,

3. Because of the *natural enmity of their hearts* : for says the Apostle, the carnal mind is *enmity* against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be : Rom. viii. 7. and as it is enmity against God, so also it is enmity against Christ, and salvation by him ; nor will any man submit to salvation in that way, till his carnal mind be subdued ; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him, neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. ii. 14. But this leads me to shew,

III. The Necessity of God's drawing them. Now this drawing, which is here spoken of is,

1. An act of *Almighty power* on those, who are *given* of the Father, and *given* to Christ. Accordingly it is said, I have loved thee with an everlasting love ; therefore with loving kindness have I *known* thee : Jer. xxxi. 3. and in the 37th verse of the chapter out of which my text is taken, it is said, all that the Father giveth me *shall come* to me, (or believe in me) and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.--Now,

2. The absolute necessity of God's drawing his people must evidently appear, if we consider that *we* but himself can remove those *impediments* which prevent their coming to Christ, or believing in him. For even that *faith* by which men come, is the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8. and of the operation of his Spirit. Col. ii. 12.

But again, the necessity of God's *drawing* his people is evident also,

3. Because none but himself can give them either *will* or *power* to come to Christ. Therefore the Apostle tells us, it is God which worketh in you both *to will* and *to do*, of his own good pleasure: Phil. ii. 13. and as it is God who gives both the *will* and the *power* to come to Christ, so also it is he, and he only, that can subdue the *natural enmity* of the heart, which keeps a sinner from Christ; all which is effected in the work of regeneration, in which he

Quickens their souls,

Enlightens their understandings,

Allures their wills,

Subdues their enmity, and

makes them willing to come to, and embrace Christ, as their way of life and salvation, well knowing, that there is salvation in no other, for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby they must be saved. Acts iv. 12.

SERMON L.

Psaln lxxxvii. 3.

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God.

THIS Psalm sets forth to us, the glory of the Church of the living God, together with the increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof. In the verse before my text, the Lord graciously condescends to express his affectionate regard for his Church and people, by saying, that he loveth the gates of Zion. Now by *Zion*, his Church and people

people are meant, and by her *gates* the places of public worship are intended, and the Lord loves to see his people come to Zion's gates, and wait and worship there: and these gates of Zion are loved by him more than all the *dwellings* of Jacob, that is, more than all the private habitations of his people, the bounds of which he himself has fixed: not but what God loves the persons that dwell in them, as he does also what is done therein, with regard to *closet* and *family* worship, but public worship is preferred by him, because performed in a more social and open manner; and in order to encourage his people to be found at Zion's gates, or in the public ordinances, he addresses them in my text, saying, glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God. In discoursing on which words, two things are to be attended to—which are,

- I. The *City*, and
- II. The *Things* spoken of it.

First, Then let us attend to this *City*, by which the Church of God is intended, as it is also by *Zion* in the verse, which precedes my text. Accordingly our Lord when addressing his Disciples, compares them to a city set upon an hill, which cannot be hid, Matt. v. 14.; and be it remembered my brethren, that this *city* is of God's building, therefore the Apostle when writing to the Corinthian Church, tells them, ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building, 1 Cor. iii. 9.

Now we may observe, that in all buildings,

1. A *foundation* is laid, and thus it is respecting the city, or Church of God, of which I am now speaking; therefore says God, behold I lay in Zion a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, Isai. xxviii. 16. by which stone *Christ* is undoubtedly intended,

for the Apostle tells us, that other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. iii. 11.—But we may observe,

2. That cities are *walled round* for the safety of their inhabitants : and so also is the city or Church of God, accordingly it is said, we have a *strong city*, salvation will God appoint for *walls* and for bulwarks ; Isai. xxvi. i. and I says the Lord, will be unto her (that is, his Church) a *wall of fire* round about. Zech. ii. 5. O! how safe and secure then must that city be, which is thus defended by such a wall?—But we may observe,

3. That cities are generally well *watched*, and thus it is with the city of which I am now speaking. Accordingly we are told in the song of Solomon, that the *watchmen* that go about the city found me. (Song iii. 3.) Now by these watchmen, God's ministers are intended ; agreeable to what we have recorded in Ezekiel's prophecy, where the Lord says, son of man I have made thee a *watchman* unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. Ezek. iii. 17. Mark brethren, these watchmen are made by God himself ;—they are to hear the word at *his mouth*, and are to warn the people, when danger is at hand.—But besides this, it is said to the Church, *the Lord is the keeper*. Psal. cxxi. 5. And indeed, *except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain*. Psal. cxxvii. 1.—But again,

4. In all cities there is a *chief magistrate*, or governor, and in this sense also, the Church of God may be compared to a city.—Now the *chief governor* of this city of which I am speaking, is no other than the God-Man Christ Jesus, of whom it is said, the *government* shall be upon his shoulder. Isai. ix. 6. that is, the government of the church.

in general, and of his Church and people in particular.—Again,

5. In most cities, the citizens are *well supplied* with those articles which are necessary for their comfort and support, and so it is also in the city of which I am speaking, for says the Apostle, my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Jesus Christ, (Phil. iv. 19.) and it is said by the Apostle Peter, that Christ according to his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. 2 Pet. i. 3.

It is to be remarked also,

6. That the inhabitants of this city, namely, the Church of God, are all of them *free men*; for says the Apostle Paul, he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's *free man*, (1 Cor. vii. 22.) and consequently has a right to, and partakes of all the privileges, which are common to the inhabitants at large.—But let us proceed now,

II. To the *Things* spoken of it, which my text tells us are *glorious ones*:—For,

1. Their *sins* are all *freely and fully forgiven*, accordingly, the Lord says, when addressing his people, I, even I am he that blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Isai. xlii. 25. Mark here christian, *whose act* this is, it is God's.—Take notice also of the *perfection* of it, for it extends to *all thy transgressions*—observe also, for *whose sake* God does this, not for your sake, remember, but for his own sake, which makes it appear to be all of free and sovereign grace.

But another of these *glorious things* which is spoken of this city, or Church of God, is,

2. Their *clothing*: therefore the Church in Isaiah's time is represented to be rejoicing, saying, he

he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, *Isai. lxi. 10.* on which we may observe, that it is the same God, that clothes with the garments of salvation, who covers with Christ's righteousness as with a robe: and David also tells us when speaking of this city, or the Church of God, that the king's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold, in which, as in a raiment of needle-work, she shall be brought unto the king: *Psal. xlv. 13, 14.*—For it is said,

3. That the righteous also, shall hold on his way, *Job. xvii. 9.* and by the Psalmist we are told, that they shall be had in everlasting remembrance. *Psal. cxii. 6.* O christian! what mercies these are, you are sometimes afraid perhaps, that you shall one day fall by the hand of your enemy, but the Lord says no, for the righteous shall hold on his way.—You say sometimes perhaps with Zion of old, that God hath forgotten you, *Isai. xlix. 14.* but he tells you to the contrary, for the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance; O blessed promises, and may the ever blessed God give us the comfort of them.

But another thing which is said of, or for the encouragement of these citizens is,

4. That they shall be saved.—According to God tells us by the Prophet Isaiah, that *Israel* shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. *Isai. xlv. 17.* Mark here, brethren, who it is that speaks, it is God.—Take notice also of whom he speaks, it is of Israel; not *literal*, but *spiritual* Israel. Observe likewise, what he says, they shall be saved, mind also where they shall be saved, it is in the Lord, that is in union with Christ. And consider moreover, what it is with which they shall be saved; this text tells us, with an everlasting salvation.

But another thing spoken of these citizens is,

5. *Their end*; for mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. Psal. xxxvii. 37. After which, they shall take possession of an inheritance, which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for them. 1 Pet. i. 4. These are some of the glorious things, which are spoken of thee, O thou city of God; and they display the glory of God's love, wisdom, power, and faithfulness towards his Church and people, in all ages of the world.

SERMON LI.

Acts xi. 23.

When he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

IN the nineteenth verse of this chapter, we are informed of a persecution which arose about Stephen; on which the ministers of the gospel were scattered abroad, and went to different parts and preached the Lord Jesus—and his hand was so remarkably with them, that a great number believed and turned unto the Lord. And after the tidings of these things had reached the ears of the Church which was at Jerusalem; they sent forth Barnabas and Antioch, who when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord, as enquire,

i. What

- I. What we are to understand by the *Grace of God*,—
- II. Shew how it may be *seen*, and
- III. Take notice of the *Effect*, which this sight had on the mind of Barnabas.

First, Then I am to shew what we are to understand, by the *grace of God*, mentioned in my text. And here let it be observed, brethren,

1. That sometimes by the *grace of God*, his *free love*, or *favour towards* his people is intended, as for instance, where the Apostle says, *by grace are ye saved*, (Eph. ii. 5.) that is, it was by, or through that love or favour, which God bore towards them, even before the foundations of the world, that they were saved; either from the *curse* of a broken law, from *wrath* to come, or from the *guilt*, *law*, and *dominion* of sin.—But,

2. Sometimes by the *grace of God*, we are to understand a *principle of grace in the heart*, which is the meaning, I apprehend, of *Peter's* words, where he says, *grow in grace*, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (2 Pet. iii. 18.) as it is also, I presume, of *Paul's* words, where he speaks of *singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord*. Col. iii. 16. Now the *grace of God* in the former of these two senses, may be, and really is towards his people, before it can be *seen* by any one, for the Apostle Paul evidently speaks of the great love wherewith God loved his people, *even when they were dead in sin*, (Eph. ii. 4, 5.) but then it should be remembered, brethren, that this love of which I am speaking, is known to none while they are in a state of nature, but becomes manifest when they are quickened by the spirit of God, at which time a *principle of grace* is communicated to them, which those who are strangers to God, are

totally unacquainted with, for as they are *sensual*, *having not the spirit*, (Jude verse 19.) they must also be destitute of that *grace* which the spirit communicates to those in whom he works; therefore by the *grace of God* in my text, we may understand either his *love* and *favour* towards his people, or a *principle of grace* within them.—This leads me,

II. To shew how this Grace may be *seen*—under which head we observe,

1. That *God's grace*, that is to say, his love and favour may be evidently *seen* in *quicken*ing his people, who are by nature dead in trespasses and sin: Eph. ii. 1. This being the result or effect of that great love, wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sin, for you have to remember my fellow sinners, that God does not first quicken and then begins to love, but he loves first, and then quickens in consequence thereof. Accordingly he told the Prophet Jeremiah, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee, Jer. xxxi. 3. So that the grace of God may be seen,

2. In the *work of conversion*, that being the *effect* not only of God's free love and favour towards his people, but also of his *regenerating* power within them; for though regeneration and conversion are frequently blended together, and spoken of as one and the same thing; yet to me, it appears plainly that there is a difference, and that they are to each other, as the *cause* is to the *effect*, and that *conversion*, which is not the *effect* of *regeneration*, is not of God, and therefore will come to naught: for no man will turn from *sin* to *God*, till he hates the former and loves the latter, and no man can do this without the spirit and grace of God in his heart, both of which are communicated in the work

work of regeneration; therefore where there is no real work of grace in the heart, no real and lasting conversion can be experienced.— But then,

3. The *grace of God* as a principle in the heart may be seen also, by the *outward deportment* of those who possess it, for a good tree bringeth forth good fruit, (Matt. vii. 17.) and a good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things. Matt. xii. 35.) It may be seen therefore by the *books* which they delight to read, for instead of their time being employed in reading plays, novels, and books of obscenity, as is frequently the case with the unconverted: it is employed in reading the word of God, and of other books which are written therefrom, and such can say with David, *how sweet are thy words to my taste! yea sweeter than honey to my mouth!* Psal. cxix. 103.
The *grace of God* may be seen also,

5. By the *company*, which they love to keep, for as it is natural for *like* to love and cleave to its *like*; therefore it is, that carnal-minded people love and cleave to each other, and for the very same reason it is, that all those who are regenerated do the same, for every soul that is born of God, possesses the same *divine nature*, of which Peter speaks: (2 Pet. i. 4.) that constrains them to come out from among the people of the world, and to separate from them, (2 Cor. vi. 17.) as the Apostle gives direction.
But the *grace of God* may be seen moreover,

6. By their *places* at which they love to *resort*, for instead of resorting with the giddy multitude to the *playhouse*, to *assemblies*, to *race grounds*, and to other places of *sinful amusements*, they are found with the *Saints of God*, at the house of God; they are saying with David; (at seasons) *how amiable*

are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth,
 even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; (Psal.
 xxxiv. 1, 2.) and like Zacharias and Elizabeth,
 who were both righteous before God, they walk
 in all the commandments and ordinances of the
 Lord blameless. Luke i. 6.--But let us proceed,

III. To take notice of the *Effect*, which this
 sight had on the mind of *Barnabas*, we are told
 that when he had seen the grace of God he was glad,
 as every good man would be :

He was glad that sinners were called,
 That their lives were reformed,
 That *Christ* was believed on,
 That his *gospel* was received,
 That his *ordinances* were attended to,
 And that God was glorified thereby.

But then we are informed also, that Barnabas ex-
 horteth them *all*, that with purpose of heart they
 would cleave unto the Lord. From hence we
 may observe, that the persons whom he exhorted,
 were not dead sinners, but living saints, or persons
 in whom the grace of God was discovered by him.

What he exhorts these saints to was, that they
 would cleave unto the Lord,—that is to say,

Unto the person of the Lord, who is God as
 well as Man,

Unto his blood for pardon,

Unto his righteousness for acceptance,

Unto his fulness for supplies of grace,

To enable them to walk agreeable to the will
 of God :

And my text tells us also, that he exhorted them
 to cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart, that
 with a fixed determination, that by the grace of
 God, they would abide

By the *truths of the gospel* as they had heard them,
That they would keep close to the *people of the*
Lord,

That they would attend at *the house of the Lord*,
And promote his cause and interest to the utmost
of their power,

the prosperity of which, is that, which every gra-
cious person delights to see, as well as Barabbas,
who is spoken of in my text.

S E R M O N LII.

Proverbs xii. 12.

—*But the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.*

I N this chapter two sorts of people are evident-
ly spoken of, namely, the *righteous* and the *wicked*.
It sets forth moreover the difference of conduct be-
tween the one and the other—as well as the *blis-*
sings which are enjoyed by the former, and the *con-*
demnation which will fall upon the latter; for in-
deed we are told, that a good man obtaineth favour (or
favours) of the Lord; but that a man of wicked
devices will be condemned: and in the verse out of
which my text is taken, it is said—the wicked de-
stroyeth the net (or as the margin reads it) the *ro-*
ots of evil men: but says my text, *the root of the*
righteous yieldeth fruit.

In speaking on which words I shall endeavour
describe to you,

- I. The *Righteous*,
- II. Their *Root*, and
- III. The *Fruit* which it yieldeth.

First, then I am to describe the *Righteous*. In doing which, I need not spend much time, because this is a character which has been often spoken of already. We may observe however for the sake of order,

1. That there is none righteous (by nature) nor yet one, (Rom. iii. 10.) for all have sinned and are short of the glory of God. Rom. iii. 23. And yet before men can go to Heaven, they must be made righteous, because the unrighteous (we are told) shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Cor. vi. 9. Now all God's people are made righteous in a threefold sense, namely,

By imputation, Rom. iv. 6.

Internally, John i. 16. and

Externally, Titus ii. 12.

The former is by God's *sovereign* *act* of grace towards his people; and the *two latter* are by a *work* of grace within them, which are equally as free and sovereign as is the former.

Let this suffice then for a description of the righteous, and I shall be lead to describe,

II. Their *Root*.—By the root some understand,

1. The *grace of God in the heart*, but as this appears to be a *fruit* rather than the *root*, something else must be intended thereby.

Again, by the root mentioned in my text, some think,

1. The *love of God* is meant, but though the love of God is the source of all the christian's merits, yet, inasmuch as it is no where in God's word called by that name, I shall take the liberty of dismissing this idea.

Now by the root spoken of in this text, there can be no doubt, I think, of

3. *Christ* being intended, who is repeatedly called by that name. Accordingly, we are told by the

Prophet, in that day, there shall be a *root* of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious. *Isai. xi. 10.* Now by the *root* mentioned in this text, Christ is without doubt intended, as appears by the use which the Gentiles were to make of him, as well as by the property of that rest which he bestows. But we may observe again, that this same Prophet calls him by the same name, in another part of his writings also, where he says, he shall grow up as a tender plant, and as a *root* out of a dry ground; (*Isai. liii. 2.*) and in the book of the Revelations it is said, the *root* of David hath prevailed to open the book, and to look the two seals thereof; (*Rev. v. 5.*) and in another part of the same book it is said, I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches. I am *the root* and the offspring of David, (*Rev. xxii. 16.*) that is, as God, he was David's root, (as he is also of all the righteous) but as *man*, he was David's offspring, for the Apostle tells us, that he was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. *Rom. i. 3.* But this leads me

III. To describe the *Fruit*, which this root yieldeth.—Now be it remembered, that of this fruit the Church speaks expressly in the Song of Solomon, where she says, I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and *his fruit* was sweet to my taste. *Song ii. 3.*—But we may observe

1. That the *root* of the righteous (namely Christ) may be said to have yielded fruit in *his* life, in which he went to the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth. *Rom. x. 4.* So that the *fruit*, which Christ yielded or produced in his life, was a *justifying righteousness*

for all his people, which is imputed to them by the Father, and in which they stand as innocent before him, as though they had never sinned : well therefore might the Apostle say, blessed is the man unto whom God *imputeth* righteousness without works. Rom. iv. 6.

But Christ the *root* of the righteous yielded fruit also,

2. In his death, which produced *redemption*, *pardon*, and *peace*. Accordingly it was said of Christ, thou wast slain, and hast *redeemed* us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation : Rev. v. 9. And by the Apostle it is said, we have *redemption* through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins : Eph. i. 7. And the same Apostle speaks also, of his having made *peace* through the blood of his cross. Col. i. 20. From whence we may see, that the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit—not only

In his *life*, and

In his *death*, but also,

In his *resurrection*, Eph. ii. 5.

In his *ascension*, Psal. lxxviii. 18. And

In his *intercession*, 1 John ii. 1.

But the root of righteousness yieldeth also,

3. The *fruit* of *grace* in the heart; for out of his fulness it is, that all his people receive grace for grace, that is, grace as a *principle*, in consequence of his grace, or love and favour towards them. Accordingly, we find the Apostle speaks of Christ in you, the hope of glory : Col. i. 27. And wherever Christ dwells in the hearts of his people, there grace as a principle is found, which causes its possessors to *love* God and to *cleave* unto him.—Therefore;

4. All the *fruit*, which is found in the christian's life and conversation, is the produce of that grace

which is received out of Christ's fulness, well therefore might the Redeemer say, *from me is thy fruit found*, Hosea xiv. 8. and as all the fruit, which the christian bears, comes from Christ, he ought therefore to have the glory of it, and it will be ascribed to him too, by every real christian, whose language is, not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake, Psal. cxv. 1.

SERMON LIII.

John viii. 47.

He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God.

WE find in this chapter, that some of the Jews boasted much of their natural descent from Abraham, for in the 33d verse, they said to Christ, *we be Abraham's seed*, and were never in bondage to any man: to which our Lord replies in verse 37th, *I know that ye are Abraham's seed*, (or natural descendants) but ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, this did not Abraham: that is, Abraham neither rejected the truths revealed to him, nor did he seek to take away the life of any man for making them known, as you do, for he was a friend of God, and consequently friendly to truth; but said Christ, *ye do the deeds of your father*. Then said they unto him, *we have one father, even God*. Jesus said unto them, *if God were your father, (that is, by regeneration) ye would love me, for I proceeded forth, and came from God.*—But said he, *ye are of your father,*

the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do, he was a *murderer* from the beginning, and abode not in the *truth*, because there is no truth in him : for he that is of God, heareth God's words : ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God. In discoursing on which words, I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. What it is to be of God,
- II. Shew how it is *Manifested*, and
- III. Take notice of the *Conclusion drawn*.

First then, I am to shew what is implied in *being of God*.—To be of God, in the sense of my text, is,

1. To be *born of God*, therefore it is said, of all regenerate ones, that they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, John i. 13.—But,

2. He that is of God, is said by the Apostle John, to be *begotten of God*. 1 John v. 18. From both which passages it evidently appears, that the work of regeneration is all of God. As it does also,

3. From the Apostle Paul's expression, where he says, we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them. Eph. ii. 10. From which passage it not only appears that *regeneration is the work of God*, but the *end* for which we are created appears also, namely, that *we might walk in good works* : and this creation work observe, is not the *cause* of the *union*, which subsists between Christ and his people, for they are created anew in Christ Jesus, so that regeneration is the *effect* of that union which subsisted before that work was wrought in them, and all such as are born of God,
begotten

begotten of him, or created anew in Christ Jesus by him, may be said to *be of God*; that is, they are

Of God's family,
Of God's forming, and
Of God's teaching.

But this leads me,

II. To shew how it is manifested, which my text tells us is, by *hearing God's words*, for he that is *of God*, heareth God's words.

Under which head we may observe.

1. That by *God's words*, we may understand all the doctrines and truths which are contained therein, and as these have God for their author, they that are *of God*, (that is *born of God*) love to hear them. And as they love to hear these truths, so also they see the *nature, necessity, and sustainability* of them, and the dependance that one thing has upon another, as for instance, had there been no such thing as *eternal election*, they see now, there would have been

No redemption,

No justification,

No sanctification, and therefore

No glorification:

for no man is *elect*, or chosen in Christ, because he is redeemed, justified, and sanctified; but he is redeemed, justified and sanctified, because he was *chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world*: Eph. i. 4. And this also, as well as all the former, is the result of God's everlasting love towards his people. Jer. xxxi. 3. And these truths, they that are *of God*, love to hear advanced out of the word of God; therefore,

They hear them *attentively*, and

They hear them *constantly*.

But they that are of God, not only hear God's word *externally*, but,

3. They *approve* of it, and *internally* embrace the truths which are contained therein, however contrary they may be to their own *natural feelings*, and to the *corrupt* inclinations of *carnal* and *ungodly* men; for as the carnal mind is *enmity* against God, (Rom. viii. 7.) there is scarcely a *truth* in all the word of God, which a carnal man will not *civil* at, especially if it tend to exalt God's *sovereignty*, and militate against the *supposed* goodness of his heart, and the *fancied* power which he thinks lodges in him. Hence it is, that whoever tries to preach, so as to meet with the entire approbation of carnal men, will never accomplish his design, unless he preaches diametrically opposite to the word and will of God, and if so, I would wish him to remember, that whosoever will be a *friend* of this world, is an *ENEMY* of God: James iv. 4. therefore whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto men more than unto God, let such judge, (Acts iv. 19.) who are disposed thus to act. But this leads me,

III. To take notice of the *Conclusion* drawn; namely, ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God; that is, because ye are not *born of God*. Now no conclusion could be more natural, than that which we find in these words.—For,

1. They did not hear God's words, but turned their backs upon them, and yet they claimed relationship to God, for said they, we have *one Father* even God. This is exactly the conduct of many in our day, they claim *relationship to God*, would wish to be thought *christians*, and hope to go to heaven when they die, but like these Jews, they do not hear God's words; they will tell us, they cannot

cannot spare time to hear God's word preached on *working days*, and as to the *sabbath*, that they spend in walking the fields for pleasure, or in some other vain amusements, even to the *total neglect* of the word of God.—But,

2. There are some, who do occasionally hear God's word *externally*, and yet they do not approve of, or receive the truths which are contained therein, but either *cavil* at them, or *deny* them altogether: they cannot bear to hear the *naked truth* preached, nor can they sit under a minister, who like Paul, does not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, (Acts xx. 27.) or all the doctrines of the gospel.—But,

3. What says Christ to such? Why, he tells them, that *they are not of God*, and his judgment in this, and in every other matter, must be according to truth, for if they were of God, that is, if they were *born of God*, they would hear God's word *attentively* and *constantly*: they would approve of, and embrace the truths which are contained in it, but inasmuch as they do neither of them, this is a plain demonstration that *they are not of God*, but as our Lord told the Jews, they are of their father the Devil.

SERMON LIV.

Acts xviii. 9, 10.

—Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:
For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee
to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city.

THIS chapter begins with informing us, of Paul's departure from Athens to Corinth.

where he found Aquila and his wife Priscilla, who were lately come from Italy, and Aquila being of the same craft with himself, the Apostle abode, and wrought with him, and he reasoned in the Synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and Greeks, and testified to them that Jesus was the Christ; and when they opposed him and blasphemed, he took his raiment, and said unto them, your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean, from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles: and he departed thence, and went into the house of one Justus, who worshipped God, and whose house joined hard to the Synagogue, the chief ruler of which Synagogue believed on the Lord with all his house. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, saying, be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city.

In these words are contained three things,

- I. An *Exhortation*,
- II. A *Promise*, and
- III. A *Reason* given.

First then, let us attend to the Exhortation. It is contained in these words:—Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace.

1. The Lord encourages the Apostle, and bids him *fear not*, which certainly shews that the Apostle was sometimes liable to fear, as well as other Saints, as it does also that he was a man subject to like passions with ourselves. The Apostle while engaged in the work of the ministry, had no doubt much to fear from his *persecutors*, who were at one time so enraged against him, that above forty of them bound themselves under a curse, saying, that they

they would neither eat nor drink, till they had killed Paul. (Acts xxiii. 12.) So enraged were they against him, for preaching Christ and him crucified; well then might this same Apostle say, that the carnal mind is enmity against God; (Rom. viii. 7.) and as it is enmity against God, so it is also against his *word* and *people*; as appears from what has been said.—But,

2. The Lord directs, or exhorts the Apostle to *speake*, and hold not his peace; and what he was to speak, is recorded in Acts v. 20, where the Apostles were ordered to speak to the people *all the words of this life*, and this we find the Apostle Paul actually did, for (says he) on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made, and we sat down, and *spoke unto the women* which resorted thither. Acts vii. 13. Now what he spoke about or preached to them, were *all the words of this life*, that is, all those truths of the gospel, which related to the salvation of God's people, or all those truths which make known man's *title to*, and *means for* glory. But observe, they were ordered to speak to the people *all the words of this life*, not to speak some of them, and to keep back others, lest they should offend their hearers; no, but to speak to them plainly, openly, and unequivocally, all the truths of the ever blessed gospel, of the adorable Redeemer: and although they might be commanded by men not to speak at all, nor teach, in the name of Jesus; (Acts iv. 18.) yet they were to go on with their work, that is to say, they were to speak and hold not their peace; accordingly the Apostle Paul says, I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Acts xx. 27.

But let us attend,

II. To the *Promise* in my text, which is contained in these words, namely, *no man shall set on thee to hurt thee*—this surely was sufficient to bear up the Apostle's mind against all the opposition or persecution which might befall him; and if we consider this promise to belong to all the succeeding ministers of Christ, it is enough to support them also in like circumstances.

But let it be observed,

1. That in order the more effectually to scatter the Apostle's fears, the Lord told him—*I am with thee*—blessed companion indeed! and this is perfectly agreeable to what he told his Disciples, saying, *I am with you always.* (Matt. xxviii. 20.) The Lord is with his ministers to *teach*, as well as to *guard* them from the assaults of their enemies; in which account it is that his ministers and people receive no real hurt from their persecutors.

But mark, my brethren,

2. The Lord doth not say that no man shall set on thee, but that no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, no, that is impossible, for all things work together for good to them that love God; (Rom. viii. 28.) and if all things work together for good, persecution must, to them that love God; of which truth Stephen was a witness, as well as others the Saints of God; for it is said of him, that his persecutors *stoned him*, but notwithstanding this, he called upon God and said, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Acts vii. 59. Thus therefore we may see, that what his persecutors meant for hurt, wrought for him the greatest good, for his soul was dismissed from his mangled body, and he was received by angels to the realms of bliss, for says he, I see the Heavens opened, and the son of man standing on the right hand of God. Acts vii. 56.

Let us proceed,

X

III. To

III. To the Reason given. It is contained in these words, *for I have much people in this city.*—This plainly shews,

1. That the Lord has a perfect and complete knowledge of all his people, not only of their persons, but also of their places of abode. Agreeable to which idea, he says, *I know my sheep*, John x. 14. and therefore it is, that when he seeks for them, he is sure to find them. But,

2. It implies also love to his people, yes, blessed be his name, his love towards them is everlasting and unchangeable, he loved them *before* time, he loves them *in* time, and will continue to love them when time shall be no more.—And therefore it is,

3. That he sends his ministers to the various places where they reside, in order to preach to them the everlasting gospel of peace. From hence we may learn, that wherever God has a people who are *beloved* by him, and *redeemed* by Christ, he will either bring them in his providence to the gospel, or send his gospel to them; the latter was the case (we find) in this text under consideration. God, we are told, had much (or many) people in this city, and therefore it was, that he sent his servant Paul to preach there, and lest he should be discouraged in his work, or cast down on account of the opposition with which he was likely to meet, he said unto him, in the words of my text, *be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, or to take away thy life, for this reason, I have much people in this city.*

SERMON LV.

Exodus iii. 2.

Behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

THIS passage is replete with encouragement for God's people, as will appear, I hope in the sequel of this discourse—the first verse of this chapter gives us an account of the occupation of Moses, for it is said, he kept the flock of Jethro his Father-in-law, which he led (we are told) to the back side of the desert and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb: where the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush:—Which Angel, was no other than the second person of the ever blessed Trinity, who in the 6th verse of this chapter, styles himself the son of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Now we are informed, that Moses looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed: which passage, (no doubt) emblematically points out, the preservation of God's people in the midst of all their afflictions. Therefore in order that the words of my text may be rendered profitable to us, I shall,

- I. Take notice of the *Situation* of this *Bush*, and
- II. Of the *Reason* why it was not consumed.

First, then I am to take notice of the *Situation* of this *Bush*: It is set forth in these words—*Behold, the bush burned with fire*—which emblematically sets

forth the church of God, surrounded with *afflictions, temptations and trials*.

1. With respect to the *afflictions* of God's people, we are told *they are many*, for many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Psal. xxxiv. 19. Mark christian, the afflictions of the righteous are not said to be few, but *many*, agreeable to which it is said, they must through *much tribulation* enter into the kingdom of God. Acts xiv. 22. Now afflictions are compared to a *furnace* in Isaiah's prophecy, where the Lord says to his people Israel, I have chosen thee in the *furnace of affliction*: Mal. xlviii. 10. and the same choice does God sometimes make respecting his *spiritual Israel*, he puts them into the *furnace of affliction*, in which they are refined by him.

But we may observe again, of the same *fiery* nature are,

2. The *temptations of Satan*, with which the people of God are frequently beset. Of this the Apostle Paul speaks, when writing to the Ephesians, where he says, above all, taking the shield of faith, where with ye shall be able to quench all the *fiery darts* of the wicked. Eph. vi. 16. Mark here, reader, by the word *wicked*, Satan is doubtless intended—his temptations are the *fiery darts*, which he throws at the people of God—and which are to be repelled, not by their own power, but by *Christ*, who is the shield of the christian's person, as he is also his *faith*, as well as of every other grace.

And of the same *fiery* nature are,

3. All the *trials* with which the people of God meet, while they are in this world. Therefore the Apostle Peter, when addressing those to whom he wrote, says, beloved, think it not strange concerning

ing the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you; 1 Pet. iv. 12. which evidently points out to us, that the afflictions of God's people were *general*; well therefore might the Apostle Paul say, there hath no temptation (or affliction) taken you, but such as is *common to men*, that is, to men called by grace, as these Corinthians were, to whom Paul was writing. Now these *afflictions, temptations, or trials*, may be compared to *fire*, because they, like that element, have a natural tendency to *cause pain*, as well as to *destroy* those, who are surrounded there-with.—But this leads me,

II. To take notice of the *Reason why* this Bush was not consumed: for the bush burning with fire and not being consumed, was as *uncommon*, as it was *contrary* to the *nature* of the thing itself: this made Moses call it a *great sight*, saying, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt: as much as though he had said, I will enquire into the cause of this *uncommon* circumstance, and if possible will find out the *reason* why this bush is not burnt, or destroyed; and when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, HE called unto him out of the midst of the bush: (verse 4th,) now as God was in this bush, we need no longer wonder at its preservation; notwithstanding it burnt with fire: and this no doubt is the real cause, why the church of God exists so long, in the midst of all their *fiery afflictions, temptations and trials*, namely, because God is in the midst of them to *guard, protect, and preserve* them; and to *supply* their returning wants.—This appears obviously,

1. From what David says, who when setting forth the safety and happiness of the church, tells us that God is in the midst of her, she shall not

be moved, God shall help her, and that right early. (Psal. xlii. 5.) Hence we may learn, that the reason why the christian stands in the midst of his *fiery trials* is, because God is with him, in order to help him so to do.

But this matter appears clear likewise,

2. From what the Prophet Zephaniah says, who also informs the church, saying, the Lord thy God, in the *midst of thee*, is mighty, he will save. Zeph. iii. 17. Mark ye people of God, the Lord your God is in the *MIDST* of you; take notice also that the Lord your God in the *midst* of you is MIGHTY, and therefore it is added for your comfort, not only that he *can*, but that he *will save*, that is, he will deliver you out of the hands of all your enemies, and will save you with a *present*, as well as with an *everlasting* salvation; (Isa. xlv. 17.) therefore says he, fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness: (Isa. xlii. 10. observe christian, for here is enough in this text to scatter all your fears, and silence all your objections—art thou sometimes beset with fears from various quarters? the Lord says unto thee fear thou not, for *I am with thee*—art thou sometimes discouraged and cast down on account of the number of thine enemies? the Lord says, *be not dismayed, for I am thy God*, that is, thy reconciled God in Christ, or thy covenant-making and covenant-keeping God. But art thou afraid, that thou shalt one day fall by the power of these enemies? God says, I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness. O blessed promises, may God help us to believe them, that we may enjoy the comfort which is contained in them.

And remember christian,

3. The

3. That all these promises and the support which we receive from time to time, are the result of his love towards us, whenever therefore we are beset with *fiery afflictions, temptations and trials*; may we ever remember the love, or goodwill of *him who dwelt in the bush*, (Deut. xxxiii. 16.) and that he hath said, when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee; *Isai xlii. 2.* no, for blessed be his name, he

By his love, *Psal. v. 12.*

By his power, *Psal. lxii. 12. and*

By his faithfulness, *Psal. xci. 4.*

defends his people, as it were with a shield; and although the bush may burn with fire, yet the bush shall not be consumed, or destroyed; for God is engaged for its preservation.

SERMON LVI.

2 Tim. ii. 10.

Endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

THE Apostle begins this chapter with an exhortation to Timothy, to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, that he might be enabled the better to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He then sets forth to him the necessity of being disentangled from the affairs of this life, and assures him, that no man is crowned except

except he strive lawfully; he then exhorts him to consider of what he had said to him, and prays that the Lord would give him understanding in all things; after which he bids him remember in particular, that Christ was raised from the dead according to his gospel: wherein (says Paul) I suffer as an evil-doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound, therefore I endure all things for the *elect's* sake, that they may also obtain the *salvation* which is in Christ Jesus, with *eternal* glory. In which words three things are to be attended to, namely,

- I. *What* Paul endured,
- II. *For Whom* he endured, and
- III. *For what End* he endured.

First then, we have to attend to *What* Paul endured or suffered.

Under which head we may observe,

1. That he endured the *rage* and *malice* of his persecutors, for however he might be respected by the ungodly before his conversion; it is evident that afterwards they hated him, and more especially when he became a preacher of that faith, which he once destroyed. Gal. i. 23. Therefore it is said, that *the Jews took counsel to kill him*, (Acts ix. 23.) by which counsel, they manifested their rage and malice against him, not only as a *christian*, but also as a *minister* of Jesus Christ.—But,

2. We may observe, that it was from the same source, namely, the rage and malice of his enemies, that he endured, or suffered himself to be *stoned* by them. Accordingly we are told, that the Jews having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead, and thus furiously

they persecute the Apostle, while he was engaged in his master's service.

Nor is this all, for he endured also,

3. *Stripes and imprisonments*; agreeable to which, we are informed, that at one time the multitude rose up together against him, and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat him; and when they had laid *many stripes* upon him, they cast him into *prison*, charging the jailer to keep him safely. Acts xvi. 22, 23. From hence we may see, that Paul endured or suffered, as did also his fellow traveller Silas, in this case, in like manner. But as he endured, or suffered in his body, so he did likewise,

4. *In his character*. This appears obvious enough from the treatment with which he met from *Festus*; for we are told, that as he thus spoke for himself, *Festus* said with a loud voice, Paul thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. Acts xvi. 24. Thus did he defame and traduce the character of this servant of Christ; and had he been the only traducer of men's characters, nothing of that kind would have been heard of in these our days. In short, the Apostle gives us a summary of his sufferings in one of his epistles to the Corinthians, where he says, of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one, thrice was beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep &c. (see 2 Cor. xi. 24—27.) From these considerations we may see what the Apostle endured.—I come now to shew,

II. *For Whom* he endured; of which the Apostle speaks in the most open and unequivocal manner, saying, I endure all things for the *elect's* sake, that I may bring them to the glory of the Father, for the sake of the *elect*: which words clearly prove,

prove, that God hath an *elected*, or chosen people : And however it may be objected to by some, and denied by others, yet I hope to make it appear that the doctrine of *election* is a *scriptural* doctrine. Let us begin,

1. With Matthew's gospel, and there we shall find the following words : For there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, inasmuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the *very elect*, (Matt. xxiv. 24.) and at the 31st verse of the above mentioned chapter we are told, that he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his *elect*; which passages clearly prove, that there must be an *elect* or chosen people, and that too upon the unerring authority of Christ himself; we are informed also, that they cannot be deceived, (that is finally) and that they shall be all gathered at the last, and glorified together. But let us proceed, and we shall find that this same truth is spoken of,

2. In Luke's gospel : for it is there said, and shall not God avenge his *own elect*, which cry day and night unto him? (Luke xviii. 7.) which words evidently prove, not only that God hath an *elect* people, but points out also how they may be known, namely, by earnestly crying unto God, or praying unto him.—But again, we may observe,

3. That the same truth is maintained by the Apostle Paul, where he says, who shall lay any thing to the charge of *God's elect*? Rom. viii. 33. which words not only inform us, that there is such a people as the *elect*, but also that nothing can be laid to their charge, that is to say, to condemn them before God. But it is worth observing,

1. What is recorded in the Ephesians, concerning this doctrine, for there we are informed, in the most unequivocal language, that he (God the Father) hath chosen us in him, (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in, or through love. Eph. i. 4. From which passage, we not only learn that God has an *elect*, or chosen people, but also that this choice is an *eternal* one, and also that such was the necessity of this eternal choice, that without it we could neither have been *holy*, nor yet *without blame* before God.

But this leads me to shew,

III. For *what End* he endured, or suffered, namely, that they also (as well as himself, who was one of the number) might obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

From which we may observe,

1. That there is *salvation* for all God's chosen people; accordingly the Apostle told the Thessalonians, God hath from the *beginning* chosen you to *salvation*, through *sanctification* of the spirit, and *belief* of the truth; and the two latter are the effect of the former, for none are sanctified by the spirit, and believe the truth, (savingly) who are not from the beginning chosen in Christ to *salvation*. But we may observe,

2. *Where*, or in whom this salvation is, namely, in CHRIST JESUS; for we are told, he came to save his people from their sins, Matt. i. 21. neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts iv. 12. Therefore it is said, that Israel *shall* be saved in the Lord, with an *everlasting* salvation. Isai. xlv. 17.

But the Apostle endured, or suffered what he did suffer,

3. That

3. That they might obtain this salvation: that is, that they might obtain an experimental knowledge of the plan of salvation, and enjoy the blessings which the gospel holds forth, even *eternal glory*, which is reserved for all his chosen people, concerning whom, it is said, the Lord gives *grace and glory*. Psal. lxxxiv. xi. So that Paul was far from acting as some tauntingly say, "If I be elected, I shall be saved, whether I *hear, read, or pray*, or whether I do not;" for though he knew that God had a *chosen people*, yet he both *preached and suffered* on their account, that they might obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and eternal glory.

S E R M O N LVII.

Numbers xxxii. 23.

Behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sins will find you out.

THIS chapter informs us, that the tribes of Gad and Reuben requested a settlement in the country of *Jazer and Gilead*; at which Moses was much displeased at first, as it tended to discourage the rest of the people, and to bring the wrath of God upon them; upon which they explained themselves, and declared, that they had no intention of forsaking their brethren, but that they were willing to leave all to the care of *providences*, and go armed before Israel, until they were brought into, and settled in the land of Canaan. Moses, being satisfied with their reply, he agreed to their

proposal.

propolal, saying, if ye will do this thing, then this land shall be your possession before the Lord—but if ye will not do so, that is, if ye will not perform your promise, (he tells them in the words of my text) *Behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and he sure your sins will find you out.* Now these words are applicable not only to the tribes of Gad and Reuben, but to all the descendants of Adam.

I shall therefore endeavour to point out to you,

I. Wherein we have *sinned* against the Lord,
and,

II. The *Seasons* in which *Sin* will be sure to find us out.

First then, I am to point out to you wherein we have sinned against the Lord.

Under which head we may observe,

1. That we have sinned against the Lord in our *parent Adam*. This appears plainly from what the Apostle Paul says in his Epistle to the Romans, in which he tells us, that by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners: Rom. v. 19. and in the 18th verse of the above-mentioned chapter, he tells us, that by the *offence of one*, namely Adam, (as the margin reads it by *one offence*) judgment came upon all men to condemnation: all men being *seminally* in the loins of Adam, who was the *head and representative* of all his posterity; therefore as by *one man*, sin entered into the world and death by sin: so death passed upon all men, for that (in whom) all have sinned. Rom. v. 12. Well therefore might the Apostle say, that we are by nature the children of wrath (that is, deserving of wrath) even as others. Eph. ii. 3.

2. That we have sinned against the Lord,

By *practice*: for as we derive a corrupt nature

ture from Adam, we are led thereby into acts of sin, or rebellion against God. Should any ask what sin is? I answer in the language of the Apostle John, that sin is the *transgression* of the law; 1 John iii. 4. for where there is no law, there is no transgression. Rom. iv. 15. Now the Apostle tells us, that the law is *spiritual*, (Rom. vii. 14.) and it lays hold of the thoughts and intents of the heart, therefore our Lord pronounces *lust* in the heart to be *adultery*, and *anger* he pronounces *murder*; Matt. v. 22, 28. and that we sin against the Lord in *thought*, appears clearly from Genesis vi. 5, where it is said, God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the *thoughts* of his heart, was only evil continually: and the Prophet Isaiah also tells us, that the *thoughts* of the *wicked*, are thoughts of *iniquity*. Isa. lix. 7.

But again, as we have sinned against the Lord in *thought*, so also we have sinned against him,

3. *By our words*: for saith the Lord by the Prophet, your words have been stout against me: Mal. iii. 13. and David tells us also, that we go astray as soon as we are born *speaking lies*. Psal. lvi. 3. and this part of my discourse applies as well to the *profane swearer*, as it does also to the *liar* above mentioned.

But, as we have sinned against the Lord by our *thoughts* and *words*, so we have sinned against him moreover,

4. *By our works*: for we are said to be enemies to God by our wicked works; Col. i. 21. and the same Apostle calls the *works* of the *flesh*; a catalogue of which he has given us, in Galatians 19, 20, and 21.—now in *all these respects* it may be said to *all men*, as it is expressed in my text, *ye have sinned against the Lord*, not against a creature.

are only; but against the Lord of the whole earth,
and the God of all their mercies.

But this leads me to point out,

II. The *Scoops* in which sin will be sure to find
us out.

Under which head we may observe, that sin
may be said to find us out, either when the *guilt*
thereof is charged upon our *consciences*, or when
punishment is inflicted in consequence thereof.

1. Sin sometimes finds out the sinner, by means
of the operation of God's spirit, whose office it is to
convince of it. John xvi. 8. Thus it was that sin
found out *David*, which made him cry unto God,
saying, Lord be merciful unto me, heal my soul, for
I have sinned against thee: Psal. xli. 4. and thus
also it was, that sin found out the *Publican*, of
whom we read in the gospel, who also was brought
to cry, God be merciful to me a sinner: Luke xviii.
13. Thus it was moreover that sin found out *Saul*,
when on his way to Damascus; (Acts ix. 3--6)
and thus it was that it found out the *Jailer*, as ap-
pears from Acts xvi. 30, and be it remembered,
brethren, that sin will be sure to find out in this
way, all that are beloved of the Father, and redeem-
ed by the Son; because the Spirit is engaged to
quicken and regenerate their souls, and make them
meet for glory.—But,

2. If sin do not find out the sinner thus, it will
be sure to find him out at some other period.—
Sometimes for instance, sin does not find out the
sinner till on a bed of affliction, or in the *hour of*
death—then the guilt of it is charged on their con-
sciences, and they are beset with the most dreadful
fears and apprehensions of God's wrath; conscience
then will speak for God, and be to the *unconverted*
sinner;

sinners, as *ten thousand* witnesses to witness against him.—But,

3. If sin do not find out the sinner in the hour of death; we are sure it will find him out in the day of judgment—and that there will be such a day, obviously appears from various parts of God's word—the Apostle tells us (for instance) that God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Acts xvi. 31. Mark here, my fellow sinners, God hath appointed a day—take notice also of what he will do, in this appointed day, he will judge the world—observe also how he will do this, the Apostle tells us in righteousness—take notice also by whom this will be done, namely, by that man (that is the God-man Christ Jesus) whom he hath ordained—and of this matter all men may rest assured, because God hath raised Christ from the dead: and agreeable to the above-mentioned passage, the Apostle tells us in another place, we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 2 Cor. v. 10. From these observations then it appears, that we have sinned against the Lord, and we may be assured that sin will find us out, either at regeneration in a way of mercy; or at the hour of death and in the day of judgment, in a way of justice.

S E R M O N LVIII.

Psalm iv. 3.

*Let know, that the Lord hath set apart him that is
godly for himself.—*

THESE words are thought to be an address to the nobles of Israel, with whom the Psalmist expostulates, saying, in the verse before my text, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity and seek after leasing? from which words we may easily perceive, that the people with whom the Psalmist was expostulating were *carnal* people, or they would not have loved vanity, nor have sought after leasing or lies. But know (says the Psalmist) take notice of it, you may depend upon it as a fact, that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.

In opening which words let us attend,

I. To him that is *Godly*, and

II. To *What* is said of him.

First, by him that is *Godly*, no carnal or unconverted man can be intended, because every such character is denominated *ungodly*, having no hope and without God in the world: Eph. ii. 12. he is destitute of the *image* of God, and is without the fear of God, for there is no fear of God before his eyes. Rom. iii. 18.

Therefore before a man can become a godly man, he must,

1. Be quickened by the Spirit of God, as were the Disciples of old; of whom the Apostle says, you

Y 3.

hath

hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1. We may observe here brethren, these people's former state pointed out, they were dead in trespasses and sins, as all men by nature are—we may observe also, who brought them out of that state, not themselves, nor yet the Apostles and ministers of Christ, for it is said, you hath he (that is God) quickened—it is worthy of a remark also, how they became quickened, for the Apostle tells us, that God quickened them *together with Christ*; Eph. ii. 5. so that the cause of a sinner's being quickened is his *previous union* to Jesus Christ, from whom the life of grace flows.

Therefore,

2. Every *godly man* partakes of a *divine nature*, as appears by the Apostle's words in the 2 Peter i. 4. by which he is enabled to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust: and without this divine nature spoken of in the above-mentioned passage, it is utterly impossible for any man to turn (savingly) from sin to God; for as a man by nature has no good thing dwelling in him, he must be made partaker of a divine nature, before he can cleave to him who is divine, or do works which are well pleasing to him. Accordingly we are informed by the Apostle, that we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Eph. ii. 10. Mark my brethren, God hath before *ordained* that all his people should walk in good works, for which purpose he created them anew in Christ Jesus. All then that are in Christ Jesus, are in God's due time created anew that they may walk in good works; David therefore when giving a description of the godly man says, he walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth

the seat of the *scornful*: but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law (or word) doth he meditate day and night. In these two verses the Psalmist tells us, what the godly man abstains from, and what he delights in, and in the following verse, he is compared to a *tree* planted by the *rivers* of water; that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his *leaf* also shall not *wither*, and whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper. Psal. i. 1-3. Hence it appears that men are made *godly* by the operation of God's Spirit upon their hearts, and they are manifested to be so, by forsaking the company of the wicked, by delighting in God's word, and by becoming fruitful, like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

But let us attend now,

II. To What is said of him—my text tells us, that the Lord hath *set him apart for himself*.

Under which head we may observe, that the Lord hath set his people apart, or separated them,

1. In *election*, when he chose them in Christ unto salvation, which the Apostle tells us, was before the foundation of the world: According says he, as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in (or through) love: Eph. 1. 4. and the Apostle Jude dedicates his Epistle, to them that are sanctified (or set apart) by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called, Jude verse 1st. Mark my brethren, the order of the words, first, sanctified or set apart by God the Father—then preserved in Christ Jesus—and called as the effect thereof; which text clearly proves a union between Christ and his people, even before calling, although many will tell us to the contrary.

But they are set apart from the rest of mankind also,

2. In *effectual calling*, when the Lord communicates

nicates his spirit and grace to their hearts, which causes them to separate from the men of the world, and associate with the people of God, and live to him : on which account, the men of the world will hate them, agreeable to what our Lord told his Disciples, where he says, if ye were of the world, the world would love his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John xv. 18. Now though this text refers more immediately to the Apostles and ministers of Christ ; yet it is equally true of every Saint of God, for it is because he chuses them out of the world, (or sets them apart from others, by the operation of his Spirit upon their hearts) that the world hateth them, well then might the Apostle James say, whosoever therefore will be a friend of this world, is an enemy of God. James iv. 4.

But we may observe moreover,

3. For whom the Lord hath set apart this godly man—

Not for Satan,

But for himself

agreeable to what the Prophet says, (or rather the Lord by the Prophet,) this people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise, (Isa. xliii. 21.) not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. Mark, my fellow sinners, how the Lord proceeds in this matter—he first forms them, or creates them anew in Christ Jesus, and this we are told is for himself, that is, for his own glory, to fit them for his service and to enable them to shew forth his praise, which they are said to do, not only with their lips, but also in their lives and conversations. Now from this passage evidently appears, (I think) first, that it is utterly impossible for Satan to get any of those whom God

forms for himself, unless we can suppose it possible for God to be disappointed--and it appears also, secondly, that till God forms a people, or creates them anew in Christ Jesus, they will never be able to shew forth his praise, neither in heart, lip, nor life. Thus then have I described to you *the godly*, and shewn that the Lord hath *set them apart in election*, and in *effectual calling* for himself, to glorify him here, and to be glorified with him hereafter, even for ever and ever.

SERMON LIX.

Zechariah ix. 12.

Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope; even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.

THE former part of this chapter, treats of the conversion of the *Gentiles*, of the coming of Christ into the world, and of the advantages thereof to his Church and people. The *Messiah* is described by his character as *King*, just and lowly, by the excellency of his kingdom, by the several offices which he executes; as *Prophet*, speaking peace to the heathen; as *King*, his dominion being very large; and as *Priest*, who has shed his blood, by which the covenant is confirmed, and his people are delivered out of distress, who are encouraged also in the words of my text, to turn to the strong hold as prisoners of hope, (for says God) even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.

In which words *three* things are to be noticed which are,

I. The

- I. The *Persons*,
- II. The *Exhortation*, and
- III. The *Declaration*.

First then, let us take notice of the *Person* addressed. They are called *prisoners of hope*.

Now let it be remembered,

1. That though all men are *prisoners* by nature, yet all men are not *prisoners of hope*, as are those who are addressed in the words of my text; for every *natural man* is a prisoner to *sin* and *Satan*, and shut up in unbelief; sin has *dominion* over him, he lies in the arms of the *wicked one*, and is concluded, or shut up in unbelief. (Rom. xi. 32.) Having no hope, and without God in the world, Eph. ii. 12.—But,

2. The persons *spoken to* in the words of my text, are the same persons who are mentioned in the verse which *precedes* my text; wherein the Lord says, by the *blood* of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy *prisoners* out of the pit wherein is no water.—Mark then brethren, the people addressed in my text, are a people who were sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water, by which a state of nature doubtless is intended; which is a *filthy, dirty, wretched, and uncomfortable* state, wherein no refreshment can be had.—But take notice also *who* it was that sent them out of this pit, and you will find that it was *God* who says, *I have sent forth thy prisoners*; agreeable to which, David tells us, he (God) brought me up also out of an *horrible pit*, out of the *mirey clay*, and set my feet upon a *rock*, and established my goings. Psal. xl. 2. But observe christian what it was, which induced God to *send forth* these prisoners. It was his covenant engagement with them in Christ, which was sealed with the blood of Christ, in consequence of which it is

that all the new-covenant blessings are, and shall be enjoyed by all those for whom that blood was shed; one of which is their *regeneration*, or call by grace. Hence then we may see the truth of those words, the Lord looseth the prisoners, Psal. cxlvi. 7.

But we may observe,

3. That these are called in my text *prisoners of hope*, which they may with propriety be, not only because they possess *hope* as a *grace of the spirit* in their hearts, (1 Cor. xiii. 13.) which is called by the Apostle a good hope through grace; (2 Thes. ii. 16.) But also, because it causes its possessors, to hope for the enjoyment of those things, which are promised to the people of God, in the word of God, and which they are not yet put in the possession of; and as they appear prisoners of hope from the above mentioned considerations, so also they may be called *prisoners of hope*, in consideration of the work of grace being begun in their hearts, because it is said, that he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, Phil. i. 6, and that where the Lord gives grace, he always gives glory. Psal. lxxxiv. 11. Now be it remembered, that although these people are sent forth out of the *pit of nature*; yet, they may be called *prisoners*, because their consciences are not yet acquitted from guilt, nor are they brought out of the prison of unbelief, so as to believe in Christ to the comfort of their souls: but then, although they are *prisoners*, yet they are *prisoners of hope* as above observed.—This leads me,

II. To take notice of the *Exhortation*, it is contained in these words, *turn ye to the strong hold*.—Now,

1. By the strong hold, in my text, *Christ* undoubtedly is intended, who also is the name of the Lord, which the wise man tells us, is a *strong tower*; into

into which the righteous runneth, and is safe. *Psal.* xviii. 10. And as *Christ* is intended by this *strong hold*, this exhortation is very proper to be given to all those whom God hath quickened, and set forth out of the pit of nature, in consequence of the blood of the everlasting covenant being shed for them: because it is by turning to *Christ*, in a way of believing, that their guilty consciences are liberated, and they experience joy and peace therein.

Now let it be remembered brethren,

2. That *believing* in *Christ*, is variously expressed in the word of God; as for instance, sometimes it is called *coming* to him, as where he himself says, come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (*Mat.* xi. 28.) At other times it is expressed by *looking*, as where it is said, look unto me all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved. *Isai.* xlv. 22: And in the words of my text, it is expressed by the word *turn*; *turn ye to the strong hold*, &c.; all which words, that is to say, *coming*, *looking*, and *turning*, are (I apprehend) synonymous with the term *believing*, and whosoever they are that *come*, *look*, or *turn* to *Christ* in a way of *believing*, shall find themselves screened

From the Curse of the law,

From the Charge of sin,

From the Punishment of it,

From Satan's rage, and

From every other Enemy;

for no weapon that is formed against (them) shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against (them) in judgment, (they) shall condemn; this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and the righteousness is of me saith the Lord. *Isai.* liv. 17. This, my brethren, is a most glorious passage of the word of God, and may the God of the word grant that every prisoner of hope may enjoy the comfort which is contained in it.

I shall proceed now to take notice,

III. Of the *Declaration* :—It is expressed in these words, *I will render double unto thee*, by which expression some think,

1. The *abundance* of *grace* and *mercy* in Christ are intended, and we are sure of this, that with the Lord there is *mercy*, and with him is *plenteous redemption*. Psal. cxxx. 7.—But,

2. Others there are who think, that by the term *double*, which God will render unto these *prisoners of hope*, the *pardon* of their sins, and the *acceptance* of their persons are intended, which is a *double blessing*, that none of the *prisoners of hope* can be comfortable in their own souls without the enjoyment of. Agreeable to which idea, we are told by the Apostle John, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us (his people) from all sin : 1 John i. 7. and the Apostle Paul tells us, that he (the Father) hath made us accepted in the beloved. Eph. i. 6.—But,

3. Others there are who think, that the declaration in my text, contains a promise of God's removing *guilt* from their consciences, and of his restoring peace, which also is a *double blessing*, without which, these *prisoners of hope* cannot be truly happy ; for a wounded spirit who can bear ? Prov. xiv. 14. From hence then, we may see, that the word *double*, if understood in either of the above-mentioned senses, will be found perfectly agreeable to christian experience, as well as to the word of God.—And,

4. The whole of this passage, is a display of God's love and care, which he exercises towards all who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, in virtue of which it is, that God sends them forth out of the pit of nature, and then directs them as *prisoners of hope*, to turn to the strong hold, (Christ)

and promises to render unto them the double blessing above-mentioned.

S E R M O N L X.

Song of Solomon vi. 13.

—What will ye see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies.

IN this chapter the discourse between the Church and the daughters of Jerusalem is continued—they enquire of her, where her beloved was gone, to which she returns an answer accordingly.—Then follows a commendation of the Church by Christ, who admires her beauty, and prefers her to all others.—He then gives an account of his going into his garden, and his design in it, as also of what happened to him there—the chapter is concluded with a request of the daughters of Jerusalem, for the Shulamite to turn herself, that she might be looked upon by them, which occasioned the question in my text, and the answer given thereto, namely, *what will ye see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies.*

In discoursing on which words, I shall attend,

- I. To the *Question* proposed, and
- II. To the *Answer* given.

First, then, I am to attend to the *Question* proposed; which is, *what will ye see in the Shulamite* by whom, the Church doubtless is intended; and as the word from which this is derived, signifies both *perfection* and *peace*; the Church of God may

on account thereof, he called the *Shulamite*. First, on account of her *perfection*, not in herself observe, but in Christ, by whom she is addressed in the following language, thou art *all fair my love*, there is *nothing* in thee. Song iv. 7.

Now we may observe,

1. That all God's people are *perfectly righteous* before him; inasmuch as they are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which righteousness is not the righteousness of a *mere creature*, but the righteousness of him, who was God as well as man. Accordingly we are told, by the Apostle Paul, that he (the Father) hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the *righteousness of God* in him. 2 Cor. v. 21.

But,

2. All God's people are *perfectly pardoned* also, by virtue of the death of Christ, for says the Apostle we have redemption through his blood, even the *forgiveness of sins*; Col. i. 14. the perfection of which act is set forth by the same Apostle, where he says, you being dead in your sins, and the circumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him; having forgiven you *all trespasses*. Col. ii. 13. Mark brethren, these Colossians were by nature *dead in their sins*—but were quickened by the Lord, in consequence of his having forgiven them *all* (their) trespasses. Hence we may learn, that God never forgives some sins and retains others; no, for those persons to whom he forgives some sins, he always forgives *all*, agreeable to what David says (he) forgiveth all thine iniquities, (he) healeth all thy diseases: Psal. ciii. 3.

Therefore,

3. They are *perfectly justified* before God; for there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ;

Rom. viii. 1. a consciousness of which made the Apostle say, who shall lay any thing to the charge of GOD'S ELECT? (ver. 33.)—But again,

4. All God's people are perfectly *sanctified* as to *parts*, they having all the graces of God's Spirit communicated in the work of regeneration; and as a child, the moment it comes into the world, may be denominated a *perfect child*, if it possess all the members of the body: even so every child of God, may be denominated perfect, the moment it is born of God; because it possesses all the *graces* of the Spirit of God; which though they may grow in *strength*, will *never* grow as to their *number*. Now as in these respects the Church of God may be said to be perfect, on these accounts also she may be called the *Shulamite*: as she may, *secondly*, on account of her *peace*, for as Christ hath *made* peace by the blood of his cross, Col. i. 20. so also he gives it; for says he to his Disciples, *my peace I give unto you*: John xiv. 27. and as he gives it, so also he *maintains* it in the conscience of the believer. Rom. xv. 13. who lives in peace, and the God of love and peace is with him. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. And as he *lives* in peace, so also he *dies* in peace; therefore says David, mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.—From these considerations then, the Church of God may be called the *Shulamite*, as it is in my text before me.

But I come now to attend,

II. To the *Answer* given.—It is contained these words—as it were the company of two armies. That is to say, *nature* and *grace*, both of which are found in every real christian; for there never was a real christian that was *all flesh*, that is, that had nothing to influence him but corrupt nature,

do we find the case of one christian recorded in the word of God, who was all spirit, or that was entirely freed from a corrupt nature; for in either of these cases no *opposition* or *warfare* could exist in them: but as the christian is the subject of two natures, therefore it is that a *warfare* is felt and complained of by him; for he feels as it were, an army of *corruptions* within him, and as it were, an army of *graces* to subdue and keep them under. This appears obviously both

From *scripture*, and
From *experience*.

1. From *scripture*: for the Apostle tells us in plain terms, and in the most unequivocal manner, that the *flesh* lusteth against the *spirit*, and the *spirit* against the *flesh*: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. Gal. v. 17. Now in this passage we find, that every real christian possesses *two distinct natures*, called by the Apostle *flesh* and *spirit*.—These two natures *lust* one against the other, that is, they oppose each other—and this opposition arises from their being *contrary the one to the other*: they are—

Contrary in their *actings*, and

Contrary in their *tendencies*;

for the one acts for God, and the other against him.—The one (if followed) has a tendency to *honour* God, and the other to *dishonour* him—and so contrary are these two one to the other, that the christian cannot do the things that he would, for he would *love* God supremely; he would *live* to him wholly; he would *serve* him uninterruptedly, and *abide* in Christ constantly; but on account of this army of *corruptions* which he finds within him, he cannot do the things that he would.

But we may observe again, as this matter appears clearly from *scripture*, so also it appears as clearly,

L. 3.

2. From

2. From the *experience* of God's people. Paul no doubt was *experimentally* acquainted with the workings of these two armies alluded to in my text, when he said, I know that in me, (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing : for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not, for the good that I would, I do not ; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me : for I delight in the law of God after the inward man ; but I see another law in my members, *warring* against the law of my mind, &c. Rom. vii. 18—23. Now this *warfare* from these two *armies*, *nature* and *grace*, is felt and complained of too, by every one who knows the grace of God in truth ; therefore ye enquirers, what will ye see by looking at the *Shulamite*, or at the real christian ? not all perfection observe, but as it were the company of two armies..

SERMON LXI.

ACTS x. 34, 35.

—*Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons : but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*

THIS chapter gives us an account of Cornelius's sending for Peter, which he was directed to do (in a vision) by an Angel of God.—It informs us also of Peter's falling into a trance, in which he saw a great sheet knit at the four corners, containing all manner of four-footed beasts, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air ; of which he was ordered to kill and eat : and while Peter

Peter was thinking what this vision should mean, two men sent by Cornelius were enquiring for him. Peter (we are told) went down to them, to whom the servants of Cornelius delivered their message: Peter invited them into his house, and lodged them that night, and on the morrow, he went with them, as did also some of his brethren; and when they entered the house of Cornelius, in which many were gathered together, he addressed them, saying, ye know that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew, to keep company with one of another nation: but God hath shewed me, that I should not call any man common, or unclean.—Peter then asked for what intent they sent for him, and after an answer had been returned by Cornelius, Peter then opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

In speaking on which words I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. What it is for Men to fear God, and work Righteousness.—And,
- II. That all such are accepted with him.

First, then I am to shew what it is for Men to fear God, and work Righteousness.

Under which head we may observe;

1. That to fear God in the sense of my text, is not to have a *slavish* fear or *dread* of God; for this is the case sometimes, with even the wicked themselves, as appears obviously from the words of the Prophet, where it is said, that all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. 1 Sam. xii. 18. That is, they had a *slavish* fear, or dread of both God and Samuel rested upon their minds, on account of

of the thunder and rain, which God sent at the request of his servant Samuel : and we are told also by the wise man, that the *fear* (or dread) of the wicked shall come upon him. Prov. x. 24. Now let it be remembered reader, that a man may have this fear, or dread of God, without working righteousness, or being accepted with God.—But,

2. To fear God according to the sense of my text, is to have a *filial* fear of him, which is accompanied with *love* to him; and by which the soul that possesses it, is inclined to reverence God, and attend to his word; and this fear remember, does not grow in nature's garden; (for it is said of all natural men, there is no fear of God before their eyes, Rom. iii. 18.) but it is a new covenant blessing, and the produce of God himself, for says he, I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me; Jer. xxxii. 40. and whosoever thus fears God, will

Hate evil, and

Depart from it.—But,

3. What is implied in working righteousness? Working righteousness does not consist of using the means externally only; whether we take into our view, hearing the word, reading it, or praying; or whether we take into our view *alms deeds*, or any thing else whatsoever, which comes under the denomination of acts of *charity*: for it is possible for a man to give all his goods to feed the poor, and even his body to be burned, out of zeal for his profession, and yet lack charity, (or love) and be profited nothing after all, 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

4. But to work righteousness in the sense of my text, is to do works

From a right principle,

In a right manner, and

To a right end.

The principle from which the christian acts, is the love of Christ: agreeable to which, the Apostle when writing to the Corinthians says, *the love of Christ constraineth us.* 2 Cor. v. 14. It constrained them (no doubt) to love God, his word, his people, and his service, and to live to his glory.—But works of righteousness are done also in a *right manner*; that is, according to the directions given us in the word of God, as for instance, when our Lord gave directions concerning *giving alms*, he said, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: Matt. vi. 3. and again, *when thou prayest*, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. Matt. vi. 6. Now these directions are quite contrary to the conduct of the Scribes and Pharisees, who did all their works to be seen of men, verily says our Lord, *they have their reward.*—Matt. vi. 5.—But again, works of righteousness are done in a *right end* likewise, namely, *to the glory of God*: which is very contrary to the *end* which the Pharisee has in view, for what he does is to gain to himself a great name, and thereby to bring glory to himself: and inasmuch as he works neither from a *right principle*, in a *right manner*, nor to a *right end*: they are works of the *flesh* and will meet with no approbation from the King of Heaven; for all works done without the grace of God, have the nature of sin in them: but on the contrary, whosoever he is that possesses the grace of God in his heart, and works from *the principle*, in *the manner* and to *the end* above-mentioned, is one that may be said in the language of my text, to *fear God*, and *work righteousness.*—This leads me,

II. To shew that all such are accepted with him:—let them be of what nation they may, for

in

in that sense God is no respecter of persons. Not to be accepted with God, is to be *graciously received* by him. But then let it be remembered brethren, that no man is accepted with God, *because* he fears him and works righteousness, but his *fearing* God, and *working* righteousness, are a manifestation that he is accepted in the beloved: Eph. i. 6. that he is made righteous before God, by the *imputed* righteousness of Christ; Rom. iv. 6. and that his sins are all put away from before God, by the sacrifice of Christ. Heb. ix. 26.

Now, from what has been said on this subject, we may observe, that when Peter said, I perceive that *God is no respecter of persons*, he did not mean to suggest, that God loved *every man* alike, for the Apostle was speaking of *nations* collectively, and of those individuals in them, who feared God, and worked righteousness—these he tells us, are accepted with God, as much as though the Apostle had said, I now perceive that God does not respect a *Jew* that fears him and works righteousness, any more than he does a *Gentile* of that description, but in *every nation*, the man who fears God and works righteousness is accepted with him, or graciously received in Jesus Christ.

S E R M O N LXII.

Psalm xciv. 19.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.

IN this psalm, we find David calling for justice, and complaining of the tyranny and impiety of the

the wicked, whom he addresseſſes particularly on the ſubject of God's *providence*, and then ſets forth the bleſſedneſs of thoſe whom God *chasteneth* and *teacheth* out of his law—he then ſhews that God is the defender of his people, and produces an example thereof, for ſaid he, unleſs the Lord had been my help, my ſoul had almoſt dwelt in ſilence, but when I ſaid, my foot ſlippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, *held* me up. He then introduces the words of my text, ſaying, in the multitude of my thoughts (or perplexities) within me, thy comforts delight my ſoul.

In diſcourſing on which words I ſhall take notice,

- I. Of ſome of the Chriſtian's *perplexing* Thoughts, and
- II. Of thoſe *Comforts* which delight his ſoul in the miſt of them.

Fiſt, I am to take notice of ſome of the Chriſtian's *perplexing* Thoughts: and here we may obſerve, that he has frequently perplexing thoughts

Concerning *himſelf*,
Concerning *God*, and
Concerning *others*.

1. He has perplexing thoughts concerning *himſelf*, reſpecting the *number* of his *ſins*, for when a man is quickened by the Spirit of God, and his underſtanding is enlightened, he ſees himſelf that *evil ſinner*, which the word of God points him out to be, and he is conſtrained to ſay in the language of David, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart fail-eth me. Pſal. xl. 12.—But, the chriſtian has perplexing thoughts alſo at ſeaſons, reſpecting the *greatneſs* of his *ſins*, under which he cries unto God, ſaying, for thy name's ſake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity

iniquity for it is great. Psal. xxv. 11.—But again,

2. The christian has perplexing thoughts likewise, concerning his *state before God*; and from what he sees, and feels of the *unfulness of his nature and life*; he becomes perplexed about his *election of God*, as he does also about his *redemption by Christ*, forgetting at the same time, that his *call by grace* is a manifestation of them both.

We may observe also,

3. That sometimes the christian has perplexing thoughts concerning the *reality of the work of grace in his heart*; for when corruption rises and he feels in himself those things which are contrary to the will of God; he is apt to draw the conclusion, that the work is not *real*, but *imaginary* only, and that he has been deceiving himself, and others with whom he has conversed on the subject.

But we may observe also,

4. That the christian has at seasons, perplexing thoughts concerning GOD: for it is no uncommon thing with one who is *surrounded with darkness*, and *beset with temptation*, to doubt of God's love towards him; and especially if *cross providences* (so called) operate with the above. Accordingly we sometimes hear the tried christian saying, if God loved me, should I be thus tempted? would he suffer me thus to walk in darkness? or would he thus fight against me in his providence if I were an *object* of his love, and a *subject* of his grace? now says the tried and tempted soul, were this the case, he would not shew himself so unwilling to save me as he does.—And,

5. As there is in every *regenerate man*, some concern for the *honour of God*; and as he feels in himself a *corrupt nature*, or an *evil heart of unbelief*, which is apt to lead him astray from God, he has perplexing thoughts, lest he should *dishonour God*.

and bring a *disgrace* upon the *ways* and *people* of God, by a life and conversation, which is contrary to the *word* of God; and which he would not willingly do; on any account whatsoever. Now this thought however *perplexing* it may be to the christian, discovers the *piety* of his mind, as well as his *real* regard for God, for his *people*, and for his *cause* and *interest* in the world.

But we have to observe moreover,

6. That the Christian has frequently *perplexing* thoughts concerning *others*, not only as to the state and condition of his *unconverted* relations; but also, as to the *misconduct* of those who make a profession of religion, as that tends to *harden* the *professors*, and to bring a *reproach* upon the good ways of God. From these considerations it appears, that the christian has a *multitude* of perplexing thoughts within him.

But this leads me to take notice,

II. Of those *Comforts*, which delight his soul in the midst of them, which are,

The *blessings of grace,*
The *promises of God,* and
The *Spirit of God:*

each of which I shall speak a little, in the order in which they are mentioned.

1. The Lord comforts, or *delights* the *souls* of people with the *blessings of grace*; for sometimes when under a deep sense of the *number* and *greatness* of their sins they are cast down; the Lord gives them also a lively sense of their *pardon* and *acceptance* in Christ, which bring peace to their consciences, and comfort or delight to their minds: the enjoyment of which, they say with David, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his mercies. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who

A a

healeth

healeth all thy diseases. Psal. ciii. 2, 3. And that it is, that the *blessings* of grace delight the souls of God's people, amidst all their perplexing thoughts. But,

2. Sometimes the *promises* of God, have a tendency to delight the souls of God's people, and to comfort their minds under their various perplexities. Such for instance as follow, namely, the Lord will not *cast off his people* , neither will he forsake his inheritance: (Psalms xciv. 14.) when thou passest through the *waters* , I will be with thee; and through the *rivers* , they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the *fire* , thou shalt not be *burnt* ; neither shall the *flames* kindle upon thee: (Isai. xliii. 2.) for no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. Isai. liv. 17. Now these and such promises, have sometimes a tendency to delight the souls of the perplexed children of God: when—

3. They are set home upon their minds, by the Spirit of God; which Spirit, is called the *comforter* . Accordingly *Christ* told his Disciples, I will pray the *Father* , and he shall give you another *comforter* , that he may abide with you for ever. John xiv. 16. and this *comforter* is the *Holy Ghost* , or third person of the ever blessed Trinity, as appears plain from the 26th verse of the above-mentioned chapter: Therefore we are told, that the Church walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the *Holy Ghost* : Acts ix. 31. and inasmuch as these comforts are of God's bestowing, well might David say, *thy comforts* delight my soul.

SERMON LXIII.

Proverbs xiv. 32.

*The wicked is driven away in his wickedness : but
the righteous hath hope in his death.*

THIS text evidently makes mention of two opposite characters ; that is to say, the *righteous*, and the *wicked*, and includes the whole of the human race. It informs us moreover, of the *misery* of the one, and of the *happiness* of the other ; for the wicked is driven away in his wickedness : but the righteous hath hope in his death.

In speaking on which words, I shall attend to them in the order in which they present themselves to me, and point out to you,

- I. The *Wicked* and their *Misery*, and
- II. The *Righteous* and their *Happiness*.

First, then I am to point out to you, the *Wicked* and their *Misery*, and in doing which, we may observe that *wicked* is a term which is applicable to all those, who are in a *state of nature*, for there is none righteous (in that state) no not one to be found, (Rom. iii. 10.) and if there be none righteous, then *all* must be wicked.—They become so,

1. In *Adam*, he being the head and representative of all his posterity. Accordingly we are told, that by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, Rom. v. 19. and by the offence of one (or by one offence) judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Rom. v. 18. Now as all men are

sinners in Adam; all men may be denominated wicked in consequence thereof.—But,

2. All men by nature are wicked inwardly, inasmuch as they bring into the world a corrupt nature, which also was derived from Adam; and which extends itself, even to all his posterity. Hence David complains, saying, I was *shapen* in iniquity, and in sin did my mother *conceive* me: Psal. li. 5, and the Prophet Jeremiah, when describing the *natural heart* says, it is *deceitful* above all things, and *desperately wicked*: Jer. xvii. 9. well therefore might the Apostle Paul say, I know that in me, that is in my flesh (or corrupt nature) dwelleth no good thing: Rom. vii. 18.

On which account it is,

3. That men become wicked in their *lives* and *conversations*, for a *corrupt tree* cannot bring forth *good fruit*: Matt. vii. 18. and we are informed also, that out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; Matt. xv. 19. and that the works of the flesh, are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like, Gal. v. 19—21. these all spring from the corruption of that nature which we derived from Adam, and manifest the *heart* from whence they spring, to be *desperately wicked*; as above observed.—But let us attend,

4. To the *misery* of those who live and die in this wicked state; my text tells us, that they are *driven away* in their wickedness, which expression clearly points out their *unwillingness* to leave this world, on which their affections are placed, and in which is all their treasure: but however unwilling they

they are, they must go, therefore they are *driven away*, they are driven *out of this world* from all their friends and relations to appear before God, even that God against whom they have so wickedly rebelled all the days of their lives:—they will be driven to the *bar of judgment* at the last great day; for we *must* all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad: 2 Cor. v. 10.—they will be driven also, from the bar of judgment into *Hell*, for the wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God; Psal. ix. 17. and upon the wicked we are told, God shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup; Psal. xi. 6. for they shall be driven away *in their wickedness*, that is, with the *guilt* of sin upon their consciences, the *law* of it in their hearts, and under the *power* of it in their lives: death shall find them *enemies* to God by their *wicked works*, without *hope*, and without God in the world: and all such as live and die in an impenitent state of rebellion against God, will be placed on the *left hand* of the judge, and must receive the sentence, depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels. Matt. xxv. 41.

But let us proceed,

II. To point out the *Righteous* and their *Happiness*. Now, by the *righteous*, we are not to take into our view, every one who is righteous in his *own esteem* only, (Prov. xxx. 12.)

But, we are to understand thereby—

1. Those who are made so before God, by the *imputed righteousness* of Jesus Christ, for Christ having wrought out a righteousness, the Father im-

gives it to all his people. Agreeable to which we are told, that Christ is (or went to) the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth. Rom. x. iv. and the same Apostle pronounces them blessed, unto whom God imputes this righteousness, Rom. iv. 6. because in it, they stand as innocent before God, as though they had never broken his law; that *alone* being the *matter* of a sinner's justification before God.—But,

2. Men are made *inwardly* righteous also, in the work of regeneration, when a new nature is communicated, which the Apostle Peter calls the *new nature*; 2 Pet. i. 4. which nature, causes its possessors to cleave to divine objects. It is called by the Apostle Paul, the *new man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; Eph. iv. 24. and as all such are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, Eph. ii. 10.—they become,

3. Righteous *outwardly* in their lives and conversations, which is a manifestation *to others*, of the work of grace in their hearts: for a good tree bringeth forth *good fruit*, Matt. vii. 17. and the grace of God teacheth them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: Titus ii. 12. the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts; by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them, Rom. v. 5 by which principle they are constrained to act to the glory of God, and to the honour of religion. 2 Cor. v. 14.—But let us proceed,

4. To take notice of the *happiness* of these people, my text tells us, the righteous hath *life* in his death.—Hence we may learn, that the righteous *die* as well as the wicked; but the righteous die in the Lord and are blessed, for blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; Rev. xiv. 13. that is, in

union with the Lord, and in the *faith* of the Lord, for such have *hope* in their death, not the hope of the hypocrite which shall perish, Job viii. 13. but a *good hope* through grace, 2 Thes. ii. 16. which is wrought in them at regeneration, to support them in life, as well as at death: it is a firm expectation of *eternal life* by Jesus Christ, according to the promise of that God who wrought it.—It is a hope full of *immortality*, and well grounded

On the *person*,

On the *blood*,

On the *righteousness*, and

On the *fulness* of Christ.

First, on the *person of Christ*, who is God as well as man, and therefore is a proper mediator between God and man, equally concerned for the glory of his perfections, as he is for the salvation of his people.—But,

Secondly, the christian's hope is well grounded also on the *blood of Christ*, inasmuch as that cleanses from all sin, (1 John i. 7.) and the Apostle Paul, when writing to the Ephesians says, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Eph. i. 7.

Thirdly, the christian's hope is well grounded also, on the *righteousness* of Christ, in which all God's people stand justified before him. therefore blessed is the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness. Rom. iv. 6.—And,

Fourthly, the christian's hope is well grounded likewise, on the *gracefulness of Christ*, from which he hopes to receive grace for grace, John i. 16. to enable him to glorify his name.—It is a hope of hearing him say at the last, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: Matt. xxv. 34. in which hope they live, and in which hope they die;

and

and instead of being *driven* out of the world as the wicked are; they have a desire to depart and to be with Jesus, the highest object of their love.

S E R M O N LXIV.

Psalm cxxxvi. 23.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever.

THIS psalm is thought to be composed by David, and given to the *Levites* to be sung every day. The *composition* of it is rather singular, as every verse concludes with these words, namely, *his mercy endureth for ever*. The *design* of it is to shew, that our blessings of every kind flow from the goodness and mercy of God, and to impress a sense thereof upon the minds of men: and in order that this design may be forwarded on the minds of God's people, I shall take notice—

- I. Of this *low Estate*,
- II. Of *What took place* when God's People were in it—and
- III. Of the *Duration* of God's Mercy

First, Then I am to take notice of the *low Estate*, or condition which is spoken of in my text: under which head we may observe,

- I. That a *state of sin* is intended, into which we were brought by our *first parent*, for by the offence of one, (or by one offence) judgment came upon all men to condemnation: Rom. v. 18. and in consequence of the connexion which subsists between Adam, and all his posterity, they

come into the world with a *corrupt nature* : agreeable to which, David says, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Psal. li. 5. Every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts, is *only evil continually* ; Gen. vi. 5. yea, their hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Jer. xvii. 9. — But we may observe,

2. That those who are in this *low estate*, or in the *ruins of the fall*, have their *understandings dark*, they are *ignorant of themselves, of God, and of those things* which make for the *present, and everlasting happiness* of all those who are acquainted therewith : accordingly the Apostle speaks of having the *understanding darkened*, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that (was) in them, because of the *blindness* of their hearts. Eph. iv. 18.

And as their understandings are dark, so also,

3. Their *wills are perverse*, agreeable to what is recorded in Isaiah's prophecy, where the Lord says, I know that thou art *obstinate*, and thy neck as an iron sinew, and thy brow as brass : (Isai. xlviii. 4.) and what our Lord told the *Jews*, is applicable to all, who are in this *low estate* ; *ye will not come to me that ye might have life* : John v. 40. no, for they reject *Christ*, and the *way of salvation* by him, and run to the *law* for life, although by the deeds thereof, no man can be justified in *God's sight* : Rom. iii. 20. nor is there *salvation* in any other, (but *Christ*) for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts iv. 12. — But,

4. The *consciences* also of those, who are in this *low estate* are *defiled* ; and the Apostle very properly calls the conscience of every *natural man*, an *evil conscience* ; Heb. x. 22. that is, a conscience not purged from *guilt* by the blood of *Christ*.

But

But we may observe moreover,

5. That the *affections* of all such are *swung round*, and Christ might say to them as he did to some of old, I know you, that you have not the *love of God* in you. John v. 42. Therefore it is, that while they are in a state of nature, they are saying, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Job. xxi. 14.—But proceed we now;

II. To take notice of *What took place*, when God's people were in this state, my text tells us, he (that is God) *remembered* us.

Under which head we may observe,

1. That God the *Father* remembered

To love,

To chuse, and

To bless us in Christ.

Agreeable to which the Lord says, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: Jer. xxxi. 3. The Apostle says, he hath chosen us in him, (Christ) before the foundation of the world, and that he hath blessed us as early with all *spiritual blessings* in him. Eph. i. 3, 4.—But,

2. God the *Son* also *remembered* to redeem us, that is to say,

From the *curse* of the law,

From all *iniquity*, and

From *wrath* to come.

Accordingly we are told by the Apostle Paul, that Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;—that (HE) gave himself for us, to redeem us from all *iniquity*:—and also that he hath *delivered* us from *wrath* to come.—And,

3. God the *Spirit* likewise remembered,

To *quicken* us,

To *enlighten* us, and

To *sanctify* us;

in order to bring us out of our *low estate* of nature.

ture, into a *state of grace*, to make us meet for a *state of glory*: agreeable to which the Apostle says, you hath he *quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1. The eyes of their understandings were *enlightened*, that they might know what is the hope of his calling: Eph. i. 18. and in one of his Epistles to the *Thessalonians* he tells them, that God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through *sanctification* of the spirit, and belief of the truth: 2 Thes. ii. 13. and thus were they made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Col. i. 12.

I come now to take notice,

III. Of the *Duration* of God's *Mercy*, for my text tells us, that *his mercy endureth for ever*; and this must be a truth, as appears also from various other parts of the word of God:—For,

1. David tells us in another place, that the mercy of the Lord is *from everlasting to everlasting*, upon them that *fear* him. Psal. ciii. 17. Mark the pious, reader, they are them that *fear him*—take notice also of what is said of them, namely, that the *mercy* of the Lord is upon them—observe also, the *date* and *durability* of it, it is *from everlasting, to everlasting*.

But this appears to be a truth if we consider moreover,

2. That *mercy* springs from *love*, therefore, inasmuch as God's love towards his people is called an *everlasting love*; (Jer. xxxi. 3.) *mercy* must be *everlasting* also, for as long as there is any *love* in the Lord towards his people, *mercy* will be communicated to them in consequence thereof. Agreeable to which, the Apostle Paul tells the Ephesians, that God who is *rich in mercy*, for his great love wherewith

wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, Eph. ii. 4, 5. From which passage we may observe, that *rich mercy* was the effect of that *great love* which was towards these Ephesians, even *when they were dead in sin*. Astonishing indeed! could God love his people, when they were *dead in their sins*? yes, brethren, the Apostle tells us he did, and it is a mercy for them that it was so, for if he had not loved them while they were in that state, they would never have been brought out of it; for in consequence of that love it was, that *mercy* was exercised towards them, in *quickening* their immoral souls. And in short, there is not a single *spiritual* blessing enjoyed by any of God's people *at, or after* regeneration; but what flows from that *great love* which he bore towards them before that time: for remember brethren, God does not *bless* his people *first*, and then *begin* to love them: but he *loves* them *first*, and therefore it is, that they are *blessed* by him; agreeable to which truth are the words of the Prophet Jeremiah, where he says, *the Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.* Jer. xxxi. 3. From which words we may learn, that God *first loves* his people and then *draws* them to himself in regeneration, as the effect thereof.

From these considerations then it appears, that the Lord hath *remembered* his people in their *low estate*, and also that his *mercy endureth for ever*, according to the declaration of the Psalmist in the words of my text.

SERMON LXV.

Colossians ii. 12.

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God.—

IN the former part of this chapter the Apostle expresses his affectionate regard for the different Churches, and exhorts them to constancy:—he then guards them against such as were likely to lead them astray from the simplicity of the gospel, and exhorts them to walk in Christ Jesus, as they had received him.—He afterwards advises them to beware lest any man spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit, after the *traditions* of men, after the *rudiments* of the world, and not after Christ; informing them at the same time, that whatever might be suggested to them by false teachers, respecting the ceremonial law, they were *complete* in Christ, in whom (says he) ye are circumcised with the circumcision, *made without hands*, which was manifested in, or by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, or the christian circumcision;—*buried with him in baptism*, wherein (or in which baptism) also, ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God.

In speaking on which words, I shall take notice,

- I. Of the *Effects* produced, and
- II. Of the *Cause* which produced them.

First, as to the *Effects*, which were produced on
 B b the

the minds of these Colossians, they are expressed in these words,

Buried with him,

Risen with him :

But, as a *burial* implies a *death* ; that idea also must be taken into our consideration, as the Apostle has done in Romans vi. 2. where he says, how shall we that are *dead to sin*, live any longer therein. This being admitted, the effects produced on the minds of these Colossians may be expressed by their being

Dead to sin,

Buried with Christ, and

Risen with him.

1. These Colossians were *dead to sin*. Now in a death, there are to be noticed,

A Separation,

A Discharge from servitude, and

A Cessation from action :

all of which ideas will apply in some sense to this death, of which I am now speaking. For in it the *regenerate* man parts with, or separates from *sin*, though as near as a right *hand*, or as dear as a right *eye* : and as to his old sinful *companions*, he comes out from amongst them, and separates from them, according to God's direction. 2 Cor. vi. 17.

But as in a *death*, there is a separation takes place, so also there is a *discharge* from servitude, for then the servant is free from his master ; (Job iii. 19.) and so it is in a *death to sin*, for says the Apostle, our old man is crucified with (Christ) that the body of *sin* might be destroyed, that henceforth we shall not serve *sin*. Rom. vi. 6.

And we may observe also, that in a *death*, the body is *inactive*, and so it is in some sense with a man who is dead to *sin*, therefore says the Apostle, how shall we that are dead to *sin* live (or be active)

any longer therein: Rom. vi. 2. for although sin ~~live~~ in the believer, he does not *live in sin* with pleasure and delight, as a carnal man does; he yields not his members as instruments of *unrighteousness* unto sin—but as instruments of *righteousness* unto God. Rom. vi. 13. And although the believer does sin, and while in this imperfect state is liable to sin, yet it meets not with his approbation, and therefore says the Apostle, if I do that I would not, it is no more *I that do it*, but sin that dwelleth in me. Rom. vii. 20.

But we may observe again,

2. These Colossians are said also to be *buried with Christ*; for in consequence of their being *dead to sin* as above observed, they became *loathsome* to those who were *living in sin*; and therefore were *cast out* by them, as their Lord and Master was before them; concerning whom they cried, away with him, away with him, crucify him. John xix. 15. Now as a man who is buried, is separated from, and mixes no more with the men of this world, so in regeneration, the christian is so buried from the men of the world, as to be no more *of the world*; and they may be said to be *buried with Christ*, because they are not *of the world*, even as (Christ) was not *of the world*. John xvii. 16.

3. But the Apostle tells us, that these Colossians were moreover *risen with Christ*, that is, in virtue of his resurrection, and of that union which subsisted between Christ and them; for they are said to be *quickened together with him*, in the verse which follows my text. Now in a *resurrection* we may observe, *first*, that *life* is communicated, as in the case of Lazarus, in John xi. 43. and so it was with these Colossians, they had *spiritual life* communicated to their souls, by the same almighty power

which communicated *natural life*, to the dead body of Lazarus.—But,

As in a resurrection, there is a communication of *life*, so also, that life produces *action*: thus it was with Lazarus of old in a *natural sense*, and thus it was with these Colossians in a *spiritual sense*, and therefore what they *rose from*, was a *death of sin*, and what they *rose to*, and *walked in*, was *newness of life*: Rom. vi. 4. and as in Christ's resurrection, he rose to die no more, so it is with God's people in the work of regeneration, they rise to die no more, for says Christ, when speaking of his sheep, I give unto them *eternal life*, and therefore it is, that they can never perish. John x. 28.

Having taken notice of the *effects* produced in these Colossians, I come,

II. To take notice of the *Cause* which produced them:—my text tells us, it is BAPTISM:—*buried with him in baptism*: in Romans vi. 4. it reads, *buried with him by baptism*, wherein says my text, (or in which baptism) also, ye are *risen with him*, through the *faith* of the *operation* of God. Now as the *effects* above-mentioned were produced in, or by baptism; it follows, that they were either produced in or

By water baptism, or,

By the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

but by which of the two, remains now for our enquiry.—And,

I. We need not hesitate to say, I think, that the change produced in these Colossians was not the effect of *water baptism*, whether we take into our view *infant baptism*, or the *baptism of adults*; of this we have sufficient evidence every day of our lives; for we know many who were baptized in their *infancy*, who are neither *dead to sin*, any more

than they are *buried*, and *risen* with Christ; but are going on even to this day, sinning against God. And we are moreover acquainted with many, who were baptized in a more advanced period of life, who (like Simon of old) are yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity; which are convincing proofs, that men neither die to sin, nor rise to newness of life by water baptism; for if so, then all those, who have been *baptized with water*, would walk in newness of life, the contrary of which we know to be true.—It therefore follows,

2. That the *change* wrought in these Colossians, was the *effect* of the *baptism* of the *Holy Ghost*, which is no other than the work of *regeneration* in their hearts, in which work men *die* to sin, are *buried* from the world, and *rise* to newness of life, without the assistance of *one drop* of water. Therefore we are told, that God saveth his people, by the *washing* of *regeneration*, and *renewing* of the *Holy Ghost*. Titus iii. 5. Now that the work of regeneration is called a *baptism*, is obvious from various parts of God's word.—If we attend for instance to the acts of the Apostles, we shall find, that the bestowment of the *gift* and *graces* of the Spirit of God, is called by that name; for says the Apostle, as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning—then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed *baptized with water*; but ye shall be *baptized with the Holy Ghost*—forasmuch then, as God gave them the like *gift*, as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I that I should withstand God? when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles, granted *repentance unto life*. Acts xi. 15—19, so that the *gift*, (that is of the Holy Ghost) in the

17th verse, and the *repentance unto life* in the 18th verse is the *baptism with the Holy Ghost* mentioned in the 16th verse.

But the Apostle Paul tells us moreover, when writing to the *Corinthians*, that by *one spirit* we all *baptized* (or initiated) into *one body*, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, ; and have been all made to drink into *one spirit*. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Now by this *one body*, the Church is intended, that body, of which Christ is the head—and the *one spirit*, by which they were baptized into that one body, is no other than the *Holy Ghost*, who in the work of regeneration, makes this *one body* to drink into *one spirit*, namely the *spirit of the Gospel*. Agreeable to which truth, the same Apostle in his epistle to the *Galatians* says, for as many of you as have been baptized *into Christ*, have put on Christ. Gal. iii. 27. Now to *put on Christ*, is to put him on in our outward deportment, in our lives and conversations ; and none will do that, but those who have been baptized into Christ, that is, into Christ's mystical body, by the blessed spirit of God.—But

3. It may be asked by some perhaps, what is the meaning of the word *baptize*, or how was this baptism performed?—here, my brethren, I need not send you to a *Greek Lexicon*, because the *Bible* will answer the question. If you read Acts i. 5. you will there find these words, John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be *baptized* with the *Holy Ghost*, not many days hence. Now if you wish to know the *MODE* by which John baptized with water, and by which these people were baptized with the *Holy Ghost*, Read Acts ii. 33. where the Apostle says, and having received of the Father the promise of the *Holy Ghost*, he hath

SHED FORTH this, which ye now see and hear.

Agas,

Again, in Acts x. 44. we are told, that they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, because, that on the Gentiles also was **POURED** out the gift of the Holy Ghost: and in Acts xi. 15. it is said, that the Holy Ghost **FELL** ON them. Therefore to baptize, according to the scripture explanation of the word, is—

To *shed* forth,
To *pour* out, or
To *let* fall,

whether we conceive of *water* baptism, or the baptism of the *Holy Ghost*; and this I think no man can deny, till he can prove that the *Holy Ghost* cannot explain his own meaning.

SERMON LXVI.

Psal. cxv. 17.

The dead praise not the Lord,—

THIS psalm is ascribed by some to David, but on what occasion it was written, is not easy to say: some have thought it was written by him, when insulted by the *Jebusites*, (2 Sam. v. 6.) but however that may be, the *occasion* seems to be *some distress*, which the Church of God was in from the *heathens*; and the design of it, is to encourage trust and confidence in God, to expose the vanity of idols, and to excite the saints, to give him the *glory* of all their *mercies*, and to praise him on the account thereof: For—*the dead praise not the Lord*:—that is, with their bodily organs, there is no work of this kind in the grave; for there is no *work*, nor *device*, nor *knowledge*, nor *wisdom*.



wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest. Eccl.
ix. 10.

In speaking on the words of my text, I shall attend,

- I. To the *Persons*, and
- II. To *What* is said of them.

First, as to the *Persons*, though those who are *corporally dead*, may be principally intended here; yet, the text will be found to be equally true, when applied to those, who are dead in trespasses and sins.—And that this is the case even with God's people themselves, till they are called by grace, is plain to every one, who reads with attention Epi. ii. 1. where the Apostle says, you hath he quickened, who were *dead* in trespasses and sins.—And here let it be observed brethren, that *natural men* may be said to be dead because—

1. They like dead men cannot *see*; that is, the things which make for present peace, and everlasting happiness; for the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 4. so that the natural man receiveth (or perceiveth) not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. ii. 14.—Therefore,

2. Like *dead men* they are *ignorant*; that is, they are

Ignorant of themselves,
Ignorant of God, and
Ignorant of the things of God;

they can neither *see* their *nature, beauty, nor excellency*, nor can they *savingly or experimentally* know them, till they are brought from death to

life; and out of darkness into marvellous light.

1 Pet. ii. 9.—But let it be observed also,

3. That *natural men*, like dead men, have no *feeling*, in a spiritual point of view. Accordingly the Apostle Paul when speaking of the *Gentiles*, not only tells us that their understandings are *darkened*, and they alienated from the life of God through the *ignorance* that is in them, because of the *blindness* of their heart; but he also informs us, that they are past *feeling*, and therefore have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness: and as it was with these *Ephesians*, so also it is with all *natural men* as such, they are past feeling, they speak lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron: Tim. iv. 2. And although they are *in* sin in iniquity, and conceived in sin; yet they neither *see*, *know*, nor *feel* their miserable condition.

But again: as *natural men* are like dead men, because they are *blind*, *ignorant* and *without feeling*; so also like *dead men*,

4. They are without *taste* or *appetite*, that is for divine things; and therefore although David, (or any one else) says in the presence of *natural men*, come, *taste* and *see* that the Lord is good, [Ps. xxxiv. 8.] yet inasmuch as they have neither taste, nor appetite for divine things; nor eyes to discover their beauty and excellence; the natural man disregards the invitation, and pursues the things of the world; which are the only things, which he has any taste or appetite for.

But we may observe again, that all *natural men* like *dead men* are—

5. Altogether *helpless*: agreeable to which idea, our Lord told his Disciples, without me ye can do nothing, (John xv. 5.) and when addressing
Israel

Israel of old, he says, O! Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in ME is thy *help*, (Hosea. xiii. 9.) I have laid help upon one that is mighty, (Psalm. lxxxix. 19.) which mighty one, is no other than the mighty *Saviour*, called by the prophet, the MIGHTY GOD. Isai. ix. 6.

And let it be remembered likewise, that all natural men, like dead men, are

6. *Speechless*: that is, they have nothing to say (in prayer) to God, nor have they any thing to say (in praise) for him; for says my text, *the dead praise not the Lord*.

But this leads me naturally to attend,

II. To *What* is said of these persons, we are told as above, *they praise not the Lord*: that is, they neither *glorify* him in their hearts with their *lips*, nor in their *lives* and *conversations*, nor have they any inclination so to do.—For

1. the dead in trespasses and sins, do not *know* God, nor do they wish to know him or his ways; for the uniform conduct of all *natural men* is, expressive of this language, depart from us; for we desire not the *knowledge* of thy ways; what is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit shall we have if we pray unto him? (Job xxi. 14, 15.) or like proud Pharaoh of old, they are saying, who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? *I knew not the Lord*, neither will I let Israel go. Now as it is necessary for men to have some experimental knowledge of God, before they can praise him, or speak well of him; and as those, who are dead in trespasses and in sins, have not that knowledge, therefore it is, that *the dead praise not the Lord*.

But we may observe again,

2. That those who are dead in sin, do not *love*

the Lord: for the carnal mind is enmity against God, Rom. viii. 7. and our Lord might address every natural man, as he did some of the Jews of old, I know you, that you have not the love of God in you. John v. 42. Now it must be allowed, I think by all, that before we speak well of God, we must have some *love* for him, but as those who are dead in trespasses and sins, are without this love, therefore it is, that *the dead praise not the Lord*.—But let it be remembered also,

3. That those who are *dead to God*, can discern no *beauty* nor *excellency* in Christ, therefore when they hear God's people attempt to set his excellencies forth, their language is, what is thy beloved more than another beloved? as though they had said, I see no more beauty in *Christ*, than I do in another man. Now as those who are dead to God, can discern no beauty nor excellency in Christ, therefore it is, that *the dead praise not the Lord*.

In short,

4. Those who are dead to God, (as all natural men are) have

No *heart* for God,
No *hand* for God,
Nor any *tongue* for him.

They have no *heart* for God, for that is fixed upon other objects, which appear more valuable, and where the treasure is, the heart will be also.—They have no *hand* for God, neither to minister any thing to his poor afflicted members, nor to the support of his cause and interest in the world.—They have no *tongue* for God, neither to speak to him in *prayer*, nor yet to *defend* the truths of the gospel with, or otherwise to praise his holy Name.—From these considerations it evidently appears, that *the dead praise not the Lord*, neither with their *hearts*, nor yet with their *lips*, any more than they do in their lives
and

and conversations, for they neither *know* God, nor yet *love* him, nor do they discover any thing excellent in him, for which he ought to be praised.

S E R M O N LXVII.

Isaiah xxxviii. 19.

The living, the living shall praise thee, as I do this day.—

THIS chapter gives an account of Hezekiah's sickness and the nature thereof.—Of his preparation for it as directed by the Prophet—his prayer to God on the occasion, and the answer returned thereto, by which he is assured of living *fifteen years more*.—It informs us also, of the *token* of his recovery, namely, that of the Sun going back ten degrees on the dial of *Ahaz*.—Then follows an account given by *Hezekiah* of his recovery, in which are set forth, the deplorable condition he had been in, the terrible apprehensions he had while in his affliction, and his sorrowful and mournful complaints: after which he ascribes his preservation from the *grave*, to the love of God towards him, of which the forgiveness of his sins was an evidence:—he then addresses the Lord and says, the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth, (but) the living, the living shall praise thee, as I do this day.

In discoursing on which words, I shall attend,

- I. To the *Persons*, and
- II. To *What* is said of them.

First, then as to the *Persons* mentioned in my text,

text, they are the *living*. But then, not all that we *corporally* are intended, because there are many of the living in that sense of the word, who are *dead to God*, and of whom it is said, *the dead praise not the Lord*: therefore by the *living* in my text, those who are alive to God, are doubtless intended: such for instance, of whom the Apostle speaks, where he says, you hath he *quickened*, who were *dead* in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1.—For,

1. These like *living men* can *see*: the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, Eph. i. 18. they can see

Their lost and helpless state,
The insufficiency of their righteousness,
And the necessity of Christ's,

for their justification before an heart-searching God.

But as those, who are spiritually alive, can *see*, so also, they can *feel*: they feel the burden of *guilt* upon their consciences, and complain with David, *mine iniquities are gone over mine head*; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. Psal. xxxviii. 4.

They feel also the *corruptions* of their nature and groan under them, Rom. vii. 24. they feel their *wanderings* and *short-comings* in duty, and lament on the account thereof:—they feel the *inherent wickedness* of their hearts and are sorrowful on the account of it: yea, they feel they *deserve hell*, and are thankful that they are upon earth. We may observe again,

3. That those who are quickened by grace, like *living men*, can *taste*: that is, they have a *taste* or relish for divine things, and their relish for worldly things is in proportion thereto abated.—They can *relish*

The word of God,

The service of God, and

The company of the people of God:

and therefore every quickened sinner comes out

(as much as possible) from among the men of the world, and associate with those, who are alive to God and living to his glory.

We may observe also, that those who are quickened by the spirit of God, like living men, are

4. Capable of *acting* to the glory of God: *natural men* may perform *natural acts*, but none but *spiritual men* can perform *spiritual acts*: they can believe in, and pray to God; and meditate upon the things of God, with that *comfort, satisfaction and profit*, which a natural man knows nothing of.—These like living people are walking in communion with God, and these like living people are walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; as did Zacharias and Elizabeth of old. Luke i. 6.

But we may observe moreover,

5. That those who are *living men*, in a *spiritual sense*, have a *tongue* for God; that is, they can speak to God, in prayer and supplication, and *for God* in singing praises to his name: and this is, what every quickened sinner has done, does now do, and shall do, in every future age of the world.

But this leads me to attend,

II. To *What* is said of these people, which is, that they shall praise God, for says *Hazekiah* in the words of my text, the living, the living shall praise thee, as I do this day; and this, all those who heartily believe in Christ, can and will do.

1. Because they *know God*:—now the knowledge which those who are quickened by grace have of God is, they know his *perfections*, which (being enlightened) they discern in the glais of God's law, and in the plan of salvation by free and sovereign grace: they know him the only true God, and *Jesus Christ* whom he hath sent. John xvii. 3. They

we become acquainted with him, as a Saviour from

The charge,
The punishment,
The guilt, and
The dominion of sin :

They know him, not only as a *willing* Saviour, but also as an *able* one, one who is just suited to their *lost, guilty, helpless* and *miserable* condition. They are acquainted also, with the *operations* of God the Spirit upon their hearts, whose office is to *convince of sin*, to *exalt Christ*, and to lead and guide them into all truth : and as these *spiritually living* people know God, therefore it is that they praise him.

But as those quickened by grace *know God*, so a-

1. They *love him* : for the love of God is shed abroad in (their) hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto (them,) Rom. v. 5. it is said also, that the love of Christ constraineth them ; not only that love which Christ bears to them, but also that love which they bear to him, in both senses, it may be said to influence, or *constrain* the christian to live to God, as well as to *praise him* : for if we love an object, we shall be led to speak well of, or praise that object, on which our affections are placed.—But,

3. Those who are quickened by grace, discover *beauties* and *excellencies* in Christ, that a carnal man sees nothing of : this is evident (I think) from the description which the Church gives of him in the Song of Solomon, which description you may read at your pleasure, in Song 5th, from the 9th to the 15th verse : where in summing up the whole, she says, yea, he is *altogether lovely* : and as those who are *spiritually alive*, discover such beauties in Christ their beloved, therefore it is, that these living people praise him.—And,

C c 2 .

4. These:

4. These spiritually living people partake of Christ's bounty, they receive

*Righteousness from his life,
Pardon from his death, and
Grace from his fulness;*

which enables them to renounce sin and live to God, and as they have received these and other blessings at his hands, therefore it is, that they praise him: agreeable to what David says, my soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: Psal. lxxiii. 5. or, as it is expressed in the words of my text, the living, the living (that is, those who are corporally and spiritually alive) shall praise thee, as I do this day.

SERMON LXVIII.

Judges xiii. 22, 23.

And Manoah said unto his wife, we shall surely die, because we have seen God.—But his wife said unto him, if the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would, as at this time, have told us such things as these.

IN this chapter we are informed that the children of Israel, on account of their doing evil in the sight of the Lord, were delivered into the hands of the Philistines, in whose hands they continued for forty years.—We are informed also, of the Angel appearing to Manoah's wife, and of the message which he delivered to her; and afterwards of his appearing to Manoah, and of the conversa-

tion which took place between them — We are told moreover of Manoah's sacrifice, by which the Angel was discovered, and on which account the words of my text, were introduced,

And in speaking on which words, I shall take notice,

- I. Of what *Manoah* said to his wife, and
- II. Of his Wife's *Reasoning* thereupon.

First, then I am to take notice of what *Manoah* said to his wife, which is,

We shall surely die;

Because we have seen God.

By which it appears that *Manoah* not only believed that which he saw was an Angel, and not a man, but a *divine person*; and he concluded from thence, that they should certainly die; which notion *Manoah* might have entertained by mistaking God's words to Moses, where he told him, thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live; *Exod. xxxiii. 20.* forgetting the words of Jacob at the same time, who says, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved, *Gen. xxxii. 30.* which words seem also to indicate, that being preserved alive after such a sight of God, was rather contrary to his received notions of that matter.

But in order to improve this part of my subject, we may observe, that it will very well apply to every sinner under his *first awakenings*, by the Spirit of God: who in consequence of his understanding being enlightened, he sees in the glass of the moral law,

God's *perfections*, and

His own *imperfections*. — Now,

1. That the law displays the *perfections* of God

is evident, I think, from the words of the Apostle Paul, where he tells us, that the law is *holy, just and good*, Rom. vii. 12. and as the law is *holy, just and good*; it evidently follows, that he who made it, must be *holy, just and good* also, and when the awakened sinner obtains a view of the *beliefs* of God, and a view of his *justice*, without being able to look by faith to the sacrifice of Jesus; under these views of God, he is ready to say in the language of *Manoah*, I shall surely die, for I have seen the Lord; that is, I have had a view of his *perfections* in the glass of his law, and if he be that holy, and that just God, which I now see him to be; I must surely die eternally for my rebellion against him.

And what heightens this persuasion is,

2. The view which the sinner has of his own *imperfections*, for while the law displays the holiness, justice and goodness of that God who gave it, the awakened sinner sees thereby, that he is altogether *unholy, unjust and bad*; and while looking to these, and not to Christ, he is saying with *Manoah*, I shall surely die: and as by the law is the knowledge of sin, (Rom. iii. 20.) the more he discovers of the *spirituality* thereof, the more he is confirmed in his apprehensions of *dying eternally* for the transgressions thereof; he is saying in all probability in the language of Job of old, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. Job. xxiv. 5, 6. These then are the views, and these the apprehensions of the awakened sinner; before he is enabled by faith to discover his *personal* interest in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But this leads me to take notice,

II. Of his Wife's reasoning upon what he (Mannah) said. For she said unto him, if the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering at our hands, as he did, and as a token of which he caused fire in an extraordinary manner to consume them—neither would he have shewn us all these things, as the appearance of a divine person in an human form, the consuming of the sacrifice by fire, and the ascent of the Angel heaven-wards in the flame of it—nor would he as at this time, have told us such things as these, as that they should have a son, how the woman should manage herself, how nation was to be brought up, and what things God would do by him.—But let us proceed to apply this part of our subject, to the awakened and reformed sinner for his encouragement, comfort and consolation.—And here let it be observed,

1. That God doth not mean to destroy such ; no, for all those who are quickened by the spirit, are redeemed by Christ, and are the objects of God's *everlasting love*, all of which, namely,

The love of the Father,

The redemption of Christ, and

The work of the Spirit,

secure the awakened sinner from eternal destruction: for God resteth in his love towards him—the work of Christ is accepted on his account—and the work of the spirit shall be carried on and finished in him.—But we may observe,

2. How the woman endeavoured to comfort her husband under his fears ; which she did by telling him ; if the Lord were pleased to kill us, that is, if it were his will and pleasure to take away our lives, he would not have received a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering at our hands ; for though these offerings

offerings did not reconcile God, nor yet make their persons accepted; yet God's *receiving* these offerings at their hands, was a proof that he was reconciled to them, and that their persons were accepted by him: or else their offerings would have been rejected: and be it remembered, you awakened sinners, that your *spiritual sacrifices* which you offer up to God, would never have met with acceptance with him, if your persons had not been previously accepted in the beloved, or if God had meant to destroy you eternally: but the sacrifices of God are a *broken spirit*; a broken and a contrite *heart*, O God, thou wilt not despise. Psal. li. 17.—And it is added,

3. *Neither would he have shewed us all these things.*—And be it remembered for the comfort of every awakened sinner, who is beset with fears of being destroyed for his sin and rebellion against God; that if it had pleased the Lord so to treat you, he would never have shewed you what he hath, namely, your lost state and condition—the nature of sin—the wickedness of your heart—your own helplessness and insufficiency, and the necessity of the righteousness and atonement of Jesus Christ—Nor,

4. *Would he as at this time, have told us such things as these.*—And here we may observe also, for the encouragement of the awakened sinner, that if God were pleased to destroy him, if that were what he intended, he would never have said what he has said in his word, for the encouragement of such; for says he, to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, (that is to him who feels his poverty) and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word. Isai. lxvi. 2.—He has told such also respecting his son, that a bruised reed he shall not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.

Mat. xlii. 3. and Christ himself says, for the encouragement of such, that him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out; John vi. 37. now, from these and such like scriptures, the awakened sinner may take encouragement, for if the Lord meant to destroy him, he would not have told him such things as these.

SERMON LXIX.

John vi. 37.

All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

OF all the passages which are contained in God's word, there is not a more encouraging one to be found for God's people, than that which is now before me—the chapter out of which it is taken, contains an account, of Christ's feeding five thousand people, with five loaves and two fishes.—It informs us also, of his reproving the fleshly hearers of his word—that he himself is the bread of life, and that he that cometh to him, shall never hunger—and should any ask, who they are that will come to Christ, he himself answers that question, by saying in my text, *all that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*: which words contain three things for our consideration, which are,

- I. The Persons,
- II. A Promise, and
- III. A Declaration.

First, then let us attend to the *Persons*, which Christ

Christ tells us in my text are, *all that the Father giveth him*: under which head we may observe, that all those who are *beloved* of the Father, were given to Christ in the covenant of grace—

1. As his *portion*: accordingly we are told, that the Lord's *portion* is his people; Jacob is the *lot* of his inheritance, Deut. xxxii. 9. which words undoubtedly apply to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to those whom the Father hath given him.

But let it be remembered also,

2. That they were given to Christ to be *redeemed* by him; which, blessed be God is actually accomplished, as is evident from the words of the Apostle, where he says, we have *redemption* through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Eph. i. 7. Hence we may see, that redemption and forgiveness of sins flow from the riches of God's grace, as does also every other blessing which the christian enjoys.

But as they were *given* to Christ, as his *portion*, and to be redeemed by him, so also—

3. They were given to him, in order that they might be *protected* by him. Agreeable to which Christ tells us, that this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. (John vi. 39.) Now as this is the Father's will, and as Christ came to do his will (ver. 38.) we are sure that not a single person that was given to Christ, and redeemed by him, shall be lost: for if that were the case, how should Christ do the will of his Father that sent him. Besides, as they are Christ's *portion*, so also they are his *property*, for when addressing his Father, he says, all *mine* are *thine*, and *thine* are *mine*, and I am glorified in them: John xvii. 10. Which not only applies to his Apostles, but also to all the chosen of God, and

who can suppose, that Christ who has all power both in Heaven and in Earth, will lose any of his *portion or property*? surely none but those who err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

But this leads me to consider,

II. The *Promise*;—it is contained in these words, *they shall come to me*, that is in effectual calling; at which time they are given to Christ out of the world, or from among the men of it.

I have often thought, what a mercy it is, that this word *SHALL* is found in my text:

It was well for *Saul*,

It was well for *Mary Magdalene*,

It was well for the *Thief* upon the Cross,

It was well for *Zaccheus*,

It is well for *me*, and

It is well for *all God's people*,

that Christ said, *they shall come to me*; because it implies, that no enemy whatsoever shall be able to keep them back, when God the Spirit draws them to Christ: which he is sure to do, because it is said, the ransomed of the Lord *shall return*, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.—But

1. What is it *to come to Christ* in the language of my text? I reply, it is to believe in him, or to rely on what he hath done and suffered, as it is explained in the *thirty-fifth* verse of the chapter out of which my text is taken; where Christ says, he that *cometh* to me shall never hunger, and he that *believeth* on me, shall never thirst: the latter of which clauses, is an explanation of the former.—Now

2. All such as are given to Christ in the *covenant of grace*, shall, when given to him out of the world, come to him for all that they shall then be

be brought to see and feel their want of; they shall come to him

For pardon, Col. i. 14.

For peace, John xiv. 27.

For wisdom, 1 Cor. i. 30.

For righteousness,

For sanctification,

For redemption, and

For eternal life: Rom. vi. 23.

all of which they shall find in Christ to the comfort of their souls, and to the glory of God: and this they shall do, in spite of all the opposition which they may meet with

From the world,

From Satan, or

From a corrupt nature;

all of which, will strongly oppose the awakened sinner's coming to Christ; but says he, all that the Father giveth me, SHALL COME to me.

This leads me

III. To the *Declaration*; wherein it is said—him that cometh to me, I will in *no wise* cast out.

1. Christ will not cast him out for the *number* and *magnitude* of his sins, for however great and numerous they may be, it is written, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. 1 John i. 7.—But,

2. Perhaps the *coming* sinner may be cast down from a sense of his *unworthiness*, and saying with the prodigal of old, I am no more worthy to be called thy son; Luke xv. 19. but remember ye distressed sinners, if Christ will in *no wise* cast you out, he will not cast you out for your *unworthiness*.

3. He will not cast you out of his *covenant*, in which you are included with himself: for says the Lord, my *covenant* will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips: and therefore

not a single individual that is included therein, shall at any time whatsoever be cast out of it.

4. He will in *no wise* cast him out of his *family*: for having constituted him his son, he shall for ever remain so, of which relationship, his coming to Christ under the influence of the spirit, is a manifestation; for because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts. Gal. iv. 6.

5. Christ will in *no wise* cast him out of his *hand*, where all his sheep are securely held; therefore he tells us when speaking of them, they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. John x. 28. Hence we may learn, that as Christ *will* not cast them out of his hand, so also we may learn, that others shall not pluck them out.

6. But, he will in *no wise* cast the coming sinner out of his *care* and *protection*; for he when speaking of his church says, I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day: Isai. xxvii. 3. and he hath said also, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Heb. xiii. 5. From what has been said, we may learn, that a certain number of people are given to Christ by the Father: that all such shall in God's due time come to Christ, or believe in him; and that after they have so come to him, he will in *no wise*, or on any consideration whatsoever, cast them out.

SERMON LXX.

2 Timothy iii. 12.

And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

THE Apostle begins this chapter with informing Timothy, that in the last days perilous times shall

shall come—he then gives a description of the persons that will live in them, and what their end will be—after which, he proposes himself an example both in *doctrine* and *sufferings*, saying to Timothy, thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, and afflictions, which came upon me at *Antioch*, at *Iconium*, and at *Lysira*, but says he, out of them all the Lord delivered me: he then introduces the words of my text, saying, *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.*

In discoursing on which words, I shall endeavour to shew you,

- I. What it is to live *Godly*, and
- II. Take notice of the *Consequence* thereof.

First, then I am to shew you what it is to live *Godly*—under which head of discourse we may observe,

1. That before a man can *live* godly, he must be *made* godly, which is done in the work of *regeneration*, when the Spirit of God creates him anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, (Eph. ii. 10.) or communicates *divine life*, a *new nature*, or a *principle of grace* to his heart; which life, nature, or principle of grace, becomes the man's governing principle after regeneration, as *corrupt nature* was before that work was wrought in him.

The man being thus *made* godly, he

2. *Lives* godly: agreeable to what the Apostle says, the grace of God which bringeth salvation teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and *godly*, in the present world. Titus ii. 12. Now to live *godly* is to live according to the *will of God* as revealed

in his *word*, aiming at his *glory* in what we do, or say for him : and wherever *internal* godliness is, it will be manifested by acts of *devotion* to God, as well as by acts of *benevolence* to men. Accordingly it is said of Noah, that *he walked with God* ; Gen. vi. 9. that is, he walked agreeable to the *will* of God, by walking agreeable to his *word*, and therefore he walked in *communion* with God.—It is reported moreover of Zacharias and Elisabeth, that (they being both righteous before God) walked in all the *commandments* and *ordinances* of the Lord blameless : Luke i. 6. and that doubtless, with a view to *glorify* God, as well as to *profit* their souls. For which purposes,

They read God's word,
They meditated upon it,
They heard it preached,
They attended to its ordinances,
Regarded its precepts, and
Prayed unto God,

both in public and in private : and thus from a *gaily* principle, they lived in a *godly* manner, with a view to glorify his name.—But,

3. It is worthy of a remark also, *wherein* it is that men live godly, it is in *Christ Jesus*, according to what the Apostle says in my text, by which expression, we are not only to understand a man's living in the *profession* of Christ Jesus, for there are many who so live, and yet suffer no persecution ; but to *live gaily in Christ Jesus* in the sense of my text, is to live godly, or devoted to God, in consequence of *union* to Christ, by which *union* it is, that a man is *made* and *kept* godly, as well as *lives* so : for the *life* which enables him so to live,

Is hid with Christ, Col. iii. 3.

Is received from Christ, John x. 28.

And maintained by him : John xiv. 19.

and therefore he *wills* to live godly, and does live so, in virtue of his union to Christ Jesus, his living head, being chosen in him before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. in whom also he was *preserved*, and *called* as the *effect* thereof. (Jude ver. 1st.) In which work it is, that a man is *made* godly, and by which work also it is, that he lives so.

But this leads me,

II. To take notice of the *Consequence* thereof.—It is set forth in these words, *they shall suffer persecution*: therefore as my text says, that they *shall* suffer persecution, they have an undoubted right to expect it, if not *imprisonment*, as was the case of the Apostles; (Acts xvi. 24.) yet they *shall* suffer it in some other way: therefore it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, at that time (that is at the time of the death of Stephen) there was a *great persecution* against the church, which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles. Acts viii. 1.

Now be it remembered brethren, that the *source* of all the opposition met with by the Church of God, in every age of the world is,

The *carnality* of the mind, for says the Apostle, the *carnal mind* is *enmity* against God, Rom. viii. 7. and as it is enmity against God, so it is also against his *people*, after they are called by grace. This appears clearly from our Lord's words to his own Disciples, where he says, if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you: if ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world; but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John xv. 18, 19. Mark here brethren, the *enmity* of the *carnal heart*: be-
cause

evil Christ *chuses* a man, the world *refuses* him, and they not only refuse or reject him :—But they *persecute* him also, they will harass and distress him, and put him to all the inconvenience they can, and thereby express that enmity, which there is in their hearts against God, his people, and service. But take notice brethren, of the *characters* of those men, who are thus engaged in persecuting the church and people of God ; they are called by the Apostle in the verse which follows my text, *evil men*, that is, they are influenced by an *evil* and *corrupt* nature, and hurried on by an *evil* and tempting Devil, they are called also *seducers*, (that) wax worse and worse, *deceiving*, and being *deceived* by a wicked heart, and a tempting Devil. These then are the *characters* from whom God's people suffer persecution,

They suffer in their *bodies*. Acts xiv. 19.

They suffer in their *substance*, Heb. x. 34.

Or they suffer in their *characters*. Acts xxvi. 24. But for the encouragement of such, let them remember our Lord's words in his sermon on the mount ; blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you *falsely*, for my sake ; rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven ; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you, Matt. v. 11, 12.

SERMON LXXI.

Galatians ii. 21.

I do not frustrate the grace of God.—

THIS passage is thought by some, strongly to militate against the *soul-supporting* and *God-honouring*

our doctrine of the *final perseverance* of the Saints; for say they, when the Apostle says in this text, I do *not* frustrate the *grace of God*, it evidently implies, that though he did not do it, yet that others might, and did do it; and although God had bestowed grace upon them, yet for want of their improving it, they frustrated that, and the design of God in bestowing it; but whether such conclusions as these can be drawn from the above passage, it becomes us seriously to enquire, and in doing which, I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. What we are to understand by the *Grace of God*, in my text, and
- II. Shew that Paul *did not* frustrate it.

First, then I am to shew what we are to understand by the *Grace of God* in this text: under which head we may observe,

1. That by the *grace of God*, we are sometimes to understand the *Gospel*; as where the Apostle says, the *grace of God* that brings salvation, hath appeared to all men. Titus ii. 11. Now the *gospel* is here called the *grace of God*, because the way of salvation, which is exhibited therein, is the result of that grace, or love, and favour, which resides in God towards all his people, and which is manifested in the gospel of Christ, which gospel we are told, *bringeth salvation*, that is, it makes known the way of salvation to all those, to whom it *appears*, or to whom it is preached—but this I do not apprehend to be the meaning of the *grace of God*, in the words of my text.

2. Sometimes by the *grace of God*, we are to understand God's *free, sovereign, and everlasting* love towards his people: as where the Apostle speaks, of being justified *freely* by his *grace*, through

the redemption that is in Christ Jesus : Rom. iii. 24. and also where he says, by grace are ye saved through faith : Eph. ii. 8. in both of which passages, there can be no doubt, I think, of the *love of God* being intended by the term *grace* : but then neither is this the meaning of the *grace of God* in my text under consideration.

Let us pass on therefore to observe,

3. That sometimes by this term *grace*, we are to understand a *principle of divine life* in the *souls* of regenerate ones : agreeable to which idea it is said, and of his fulness have all we received, and *grace for grace* ; that is, *grace as a principle*, for, or in consideration of God's *grace*, or love, and favor towards them : in this *grace* it is I presume, in which the Apostle Peter exhorts those to whom he wrote to grow, saying, grow in *grace*, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. iii. 18. But even this is not the meaning of the *grace of God* in the words of my text.

We may observe again,

4. That by the term *grace*, we are sometimes to understand a *particular doctrine*, as where the Apostle says, be not carried about with divers and *strange doctrines* : for it is a good thing that the heart be established with *grace*, Heb. xiii. 9. that is, with the *doctrine of grace* ; in opposition to the *strange doctrines* the Apostle guards these Hebrews against. And this I apprehend is the meaning of the *grace of God* in the words of my text, namely, the particular doctrine of *justification before God*, by the *imputed* righteousness of Jesus Christ, which doctrine, the Apostle in the preceding verses to that out of which my text is taken, clearly establishes, in opposition to some who suggested that justification was by the works of the law.

Having

Having therefore shewn you what we are to understand by the *grace of God* in my text;

I shall proceed,

II. To shew that Paul did not *frustrate* it. Now to *frustrate* the *grace of God*, observe, is to make it void, in vain, or of none effect.—But,

1. Let it be remembered, brethren, if we understand by the *grace of God*,

The *gospel*,

The *love and favor of God*, or

A *principle* in the heart,

it can never be frustrated in these senses by any man, or set of men whatsoever, for the *gospel* shall answer the end for which it is preached, namely, to comfort the weary and the heavy laden, and to support the minds of God's people under their various trials, while on their pilgrimage here below. Accordingly we are told by the Lord himself, who when speaking of his *word*, says, it shall not return unto me *void*; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. *Isai. lv. 11.*

As to God's love and favor towards his people, that cannot be *frustrated*, nor the end which he had in view in loving them, made void: for that he himself is *perfect, unchangeable*, and ever remains the same towards those who are the objects thereof, for we are told, he will *rest in his love*. *Zeph. iii. 17.*

And as his love and favor cannot be frustrated, so neither can his grace as a *principle in the heart*; for the water (says Christ) that I shall give him, shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life: *John iv. 14.* and the Apostle says, that he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: *Phil. i. 6.* so that, in none of the above-mentioned senses, can

the grace of God be frustrated, or made void by any man.—But,

2. The grace of God (if we understand thereby any of the doctrines of grace) may be, and is many times frustrated, as it is by all those who assert, that a sinner's justification *before God*, is either in *whole*, or in *part*, by the works or deeds of the law; for if righteousness come by the law, (that is, by man's own obedience thereto) then Christ is dead in vain: (Gal. ii. 21.) and consequently, whosoever he is, that publishes such doctrine, may be said to *frustrate* the grace of God, by making void the doctrine of justification *before God*, by the *active* and *passive* obedience of Christ; by which mean, the chain of gospel truths is entirely broken, and the whole plan of salvation is frustrated, denied, and departed from.—But we may remark,

3. That Paul tells us, he did it not: for says he, *I do not frustrate the grace of God*; that is, I do not make void, or depart from that chain of gospel truths, which make the salvation of men to appear of grace, by directing them to the works of the law, for justification and eternal life; no, for he like a man taught of God, constantly and uniformly maintained in his *preaching, conversation and writing*, that by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in (God's) sight—but that men are justified *freely* by his *grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Rom. iii. 20—24. He maintained that Christ went to the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, (Rom. x. 4.) and that we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace: Eph. i. 7. for says he, by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, *NOT OF WORKS*, lest any man should boast: Eph. ii. 8, 9. from which passages

passages we may clearly see, that the Apostle did not frustrate the grace of God, or make void, either in his *preaching*, or *writing*, that glorious doctrine, of a sinner's justification before God, by the imputed righteousness of Christ. Rom. iv. 6.

SERMON LXXII.

Genesis xxviii. 12.

And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven: and behold the Angels of God ascending and descending on it.

THE former part of this chapter furnishes us with an account of the *charge* which *God* gave to *Jacob*, not to take a wife of the daughters of *Canaan*, but to go to *Padan-aram*, and take a wife from his mother's family; after which charge, he blessed him, and sent him away—we are informed also, of the notice which *Esau* took of this blessing and charge, which led him to take a wife of the family of *Ismael*.—*Jacob* however went on his way to *Haran*, and he lighted upon a certain place, (we are told) and tarried there all night, because the sun was set: and he took the stones of that place for his pillows, and laid him down and slept; and he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven: and behold the Angels of God ascending and descending on it.

In discoursing on which words, I shall shew,

- I. What we are to understand by this *Ladder*, and
- II. Take notice of its *Use*.

First, then I am to shew what we are to understand by this *Ladder*. By the *ladder* in my text, it is beyond a doubt, I think, that Christ is emblematically set forth; and whereas it is said, that it was set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven; this serves to point out the *human nature* of Christ, which was in his *incarnation* set up on the earth; and his *divine nature*, which was the top of this ladder that reached to Heaven. If we take these ideas forward to the gospel of Saint John, we shall there find, that Christ when addressing *Nathaniel* said, verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man: John i. 51. in which passage the use of a ladder is evidently set forth.

From these considerations, some have thought proper to deduce from the passage now under consideration,

1. The Doctrine of *God's providence*, and the various steps of it, which he takes, in order to bring about his *own glory*, and his *people's good*, and which is *steady* as well as *firm*; reaching to all that relates to their *temporal*, as well as their *spiritual* and *eternal* welfare: a view of which, must no doubt be very encouraging to *Jacob* in his present circumstances, as it must also to every child of God, when he considers, that God is a God of providence to him, as well as a God of grace in Christ Jesus.—But,

2. Others there are, who have thought proper, to deduce from my text, now under consideration, the doctrine of the *ministration of Angels*, which they might do perhaps, both with *propriety* and *profit*: for says the Apostle, when speaking of Angels, are they not all *ministering spirits*, sent forth to

to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation? Heb. i. 14.—But,

3. As the ladder in my text emblematically sets forth Christ, there may be deduced from it moreover, the doctrine of *salvation by him*, and the various steps which God the Father took, in order to bring that matter about, consistent with his own attributes: in this point of view it is, that I mean to consider the subject before me; which I presume I may do, without doing any violence to the passage, now under consideration.

I shall proceed therefore as proposed,

II. To take notice of the *Use* of this Ladder.—The *situation* of it being described in my text, as reaching from *Earth to Heaven* in the first place: its *use* is next pointed out by the Angels of God *ascending and descending* on it: and it is upon this ladder also, that God *descends* to his people, as well as that upon which his people *ascend* to him, he being the one *mediator* between God and man. 1 Tim. ii. 5. But let us proceed to take notice, *first*, of the various steps by which God *descends* to his people, upon this ladder Christ, and *secondly*, of those steps by which they *ascend* to him upon the same ladder.

As to the steps by which God descends to his people; we have to observe, that love *precedes* them all: nor is there a single step which God takes in their salvation, but what is the result of that love which he bore towards them, even before the foundations of the world.

This being premised, we may observe,

1. That one step by which God descends to his people is, by entering into *covenant engagements* with his Son Jesus Christ, as the *federal head* of his

his people : in which covenant, the Father required him,

To fulfil the law, and

To suffer its *penalty*

on the behalf of his people : to this, Christ the covenant head agreed, saying, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. Heb. x. vii. The Father promised to uphold him (as man) for the work, *Isai. xlii. 6.* and that he should see his seed, and prolong his days, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hands.—Accordingly we are told, that in the fulness of time, God sent forth his *Son*; Gal. iv. 4. who went to the end of the law for *righteousness*; Rom. x. 4. after which he suffered the *penalty*, which was due to all his people as transgressors thereof; agreeable to which the Apostle Peter tells us, that Christ also hath once *suffered for sin*, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God: 1 Peter iii. 18. and the Apostle Paul says, that Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: Gal. iii. 13. thus was Christ given for a covenant, (that is, for a covenant head) of the people, who were the objects of God's everlasting love.—But,

2. Another step, which God takes in *descending* to his people on this *ladder* is, that of *blessing and choosing* them in Christ.—Agreeable to which the Apostle says, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath *blessed* us with all *spiritual blessings* in heavenly places, (or things) in Christ; according as he hath *chosen* us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be *holy* and without blame before him, in (or through) love. Eph. i. 3, 4. From which portion of God's word, it evidently appears, that he chose his people in Christ, before the foundation of the world, and that he blessed them in him with all

Spiritual blessings as early : it appears moreover, that the end which God had in view, in making this early choice was, that the objects thereof might be *holy*, and without *blame* before him ; which they could not have been without this choice : And as they could not have been made *holy* and without *blame* before God without it, so neither could they have been glorified had not this choice been made.

But let us proceed,—

3. To another step, which God took in descending to his people on this ladder Christ ; it is that of *adopting them into his family*, which act took place in divine predestination, and bears the same date with election : Eph. i. 5. *in this act the relationship between Christ and his people was constituted*, and by this act it is, that they become *entitled to all the blessings of grace here, and to glory hereafter* : for if *children*, says the Apostle, then *heirs*, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ : Rom. viii. 17. and the same Apostle says, that it is because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the *spirit of his Son into your hearts*. Gal. iv. 6.—But,

4. Another step, by which God descends to his people is, by the *justification of their persons in his sight*. This, as well as the *three former*, is an *eminent and eternal act of God towards them*, and therefore runs parallel therewith, the matter of it is Christ's righteousness, consisting of his *active and passive obedience*, which God puts to the account of all his people : therefore says the Apostle, blessed is the man unto whom God *imputes righteousness* : Rom. iv. 6. and again, we are said to be *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*, Rom. iii. 24. These matters being adjusted by the Lord, the next step which he sets in descending to his people on this ladder is,

5. By

5. By the *incarnation*, or coming of Christ, into this lower world, by which act of divine goodness, a wonderful mystery presents itself to us, which is, *GOD manifest in the FLESH*. 1 Tim. iii. 16. In this stupendous act, there took place a union of the divine and human natures in one person; for he that is the *child born*, is called also by the same Prophet, the *MIGHTY GOD*. Isai. ix. 6. And although Christ as God, could not *suffer* and die for the sins of his people; yet be it remembered my fellow sinners, that he who did so suffer and die, was GOD as well as man; this appears clearly from the Acts of the Apostles, where it is said; *fixed the Church of God, which he (God) hath purchased with his own blood*. Acts xx. 28.

6. The next step, which God takes in his approaches towards his people is, to *take possession of their hearts*: for says the Apostle, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son *into your hearts*; Gal. iv. 6. and as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Rom. viii. 14. Now the ends, which God hath in view, in coming into the hearts of his people, are,

To quicken their souls,

To enlighten their understandings,

To regenerate their hearts,

To attract their affections, and

To make them meet for glory:

which ends are sure to be accomplished, when God exerts his almighty power, for I will work, saith he, and who shall let it? Isai. xliii. 13. But having taken notice of the various steps, which God takes in descending to his people, on this ladder Christ, I must leave the remaining part of my subject till another opportunity.

S E R M O N LXXIII.

Gen. xxviii. 12.

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the Earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven: and behold the Angels of God ascending and descending on it.

IN a former discourse on these words, I proposed to shew you,

- I. What we are to understand by this *Ladder*, and
- II. To take notice of its *Use*.

The former of which we have attended to, as also to the latter, so far as it relates to God's descending to his people.

I come now, *secondly*, to point out as proposed, those steps by which his people *ascend* to him upon the same ladder: under which head, I shall naturally be led to speak of *experimental* godliness. And here let it be observed, that before any man can set a single step God-ward, on *Christ* the ladder, spoken of above; the *life of God* must be communicated to his soul: for which purpose it is, that God the Spirit takes possession of him, and he who was before that time, dead in trespasses and sins, becomes quickened by his almighty power. Eph. ii. 1. This being accomplished, the man

*Sees his state,
Feels his guilt, and
Cries for mercy;*

nor can he rest satisfied, till he enjoys that mercy, which his *quickened soul* feels the want of, and which

sooner

sooner or later is enjoyed by him, in a way of believing in, or resting by faith on Christ. We may observe therefore,

1. That one step, by which the quickened sinner ascends towards God is, that of his *resting by faith*, on the *spotless righteousness* of Jesus Christ, for which he went to the end of the law. And this he is encouraged to do, from a view of the *insufficiency* of his own righteousness to justify him before God; and of the *all-sufficiency* of Christ's righteousness for that purpose: for clothed in this righteousness no man can be *condemned before God*, and destitute of it, no man can be *justified before him*. Whoever therefore is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, stands perfectly secure from all condemnation *before God*; and the believer can stand here, and take a view on the one hand of his own transgressions against God's law, for which he is truly sorry; and on the other hand, he views the love and faithfulness of his *surety*, in fulfilling it on his account, and is thankful for it.—But,

2. Another step, by which the people of God ascend towards him is, in their relying by faith upon the *atonement* of Christ: they see that they deserve to be punished on account of their transgressions, and that the law pronounces every transgressor accursed: for it is written, *curled is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them*. Gal. iii. 10. but we are told, that Christ hath redeemed us (his people) from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: (Gal. iii. 13.) who his own self, bare our sins, in his own body on the tree: 1 Pet. ii. 24. that is,

He bore the charge of them, Isai. liii. 6. and

He bore the punishment of them, Isai. liii. 5.

and when the believer is enabled by faith, to rest

upon the *atonement* which Christ hath made; he can there stand and view to his soul's comfort and God's glory, that he is delivered from his *debt* of punishment, Christ his surety having paid it for him; on which account God declares, *fury is not in me*; Isai. xxvii. 4. that is, towards those for whom Christ hath made an atonement.

3. Another step, by which the believer ascends to God on this ladder is, by his living by faith upon *Christ's fulness*, for out of his fulness it is, that all we (who are quickened by grace) have received, and grace for grace. John i. 16.—Mark here believer, you do not live upon a fulness of your own, but upon the inexhaustible fulness of Jesus Christ; who says, because I live, you shall live also. John xiv. 19. agreeable to which are the words of the Apostle, where he says, your life is hid with Christ in God; (and) when Christ who is your life shall appear; then shall ye also appear with him, in glory. Col. iii. 3; 4. these are precious promises, upon which, when the believer is enabled to rely, he can bid defiance to all his foes.—But,

4. Another step, by which God's people ascend towards him on this ladder is, when they *deserve* and by faith *rely upon* that *union*, which subsists between him and them. This union was constituted when God first chose his people in Christ; which the Apostle tells us was, *before the foundation of the world*. Eph. i. 4. This *union* is manifested in effectual calling; when in consequence thereof, life flows from Christ the head to his members, which makes them fruitful in every good word and work; for he tells us, I am like a green fir-tree, from me is your *fruit* sound. Hosea xiv. 8.—Mark, we do not first bear fruit and then are put into Christ, but we are—*Chosen* in Christ, Eph. i. 4.—*Preserved* in him, and *Called*, Jude i. as the effect thereof;

thereof; and then we bring forth fruit to the honour and praise of him, who calls us out of darkness, into his marvellous light. This is a truth which *nature* itself preaches to us, as well as the word of God; for every one must know, that the fruit upon a vine is not the *cause* of the subsisting union between the branches and the vine: but is a manifestation of that union:—the application is easy. Now when the believer has a proper and scriptural view of this *union*, he may well say, as the Apostle does, when speaking of the love of God, who shall separate us? for,

Satan *cannot*, and

God *will* not:

therefore where should the members be, but with Christ their living head.

5. Another step, by which the believer ascends God-ward on this ladder is, by being enabled to rest by faith on the *perfections of Christ*. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, Col. ii. 9. there is in him a fulness of *love, wisdom, power, and faithfulness* to rely upon; as well as a fulness of *grace*, to live upon: he is *unchangeable* in his nature, being the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: Heb. xiii. 8. he is,

Omnipotent, or Almighty, Rev. i. 8.

Omnipresent, or in every place, Matt. xviii. 20. and

Omniscient, knowing all things Heb. iv. 13.

that are *past, present, and to come*. Now while the believer stands here, he can bid defiance to all his vaunting foes, and rejoice at the opening prospect of being for ever with his God.

Here he stands his appointed time till—

6. The next step he takes, lands his happy soul, in the mansions of eternal bliss; where he will know no more *death*,—no more *pain*, nor—any more *sorrow*.—For God shall wipe away all tears from his eyes,

eyes, (Rev. xxi. iv.) and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isai. xxxv. 10. Here it is, that the spirits of just men made perfect, are constantly and uninterruptedly praising God; saying, unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.

If we attend to the *properties* of this ladder, we may observe that it is,

A *long* one,
A *strong* one,
A *safe*, and
A *useful* one.

It is a *long* one, for it reaches from Earth to Heaven, as my text declares: it is a *strong* one, and not liable to break, though thousands and tens of thousands are climbing it together: it is a *safe* one, for none are liable to fall off, into eternal destruction, and lastly, it is a *useful* one, and will stand so long as there is a child of God upon the earth, but when all God's people are arrived at glory, this ladder will be taken down, for then will Christ deliver up the kingdom, (that is, his *mediatorial* kingdom) and God will be all in all. 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.

SERMON LXXIV.

Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

For the Lord God is a sun and a shield, the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

IN the foregoing part of this psalm, David expresses a desire for communion with God in

his sanctuary,—he then sets forth the blessedness of those who dwell therein, and prays, that he might be restored to it; saying, a day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness: for (says he) the Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

In discoursing on which words, I shall take notice,

- I. Of what God *is* to his People, and
- II. Of what he hath *Promised* to give them.

First, then I am to take notice of what God is to his People, my text tells me, that he is,

A *sun*, and

A *shield*:

both of which appellations are applicable to our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom it is said, when he made his appearance in this lower world; the day-spring (or sun-rising) from on high hath visited us. Luke 1. 78. He is called moreover, the *sun of righteousness*, in Malachi's prophecy, where it is said, but unto you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings. Mal. iv. 2. Now Christ may be compared to the sun, because

It is *light itself*,

It *enlightens* other bodies,

It *warms* and *refreshes*, and

It makes the *earth fruitful*:

All of which ideas will apply to Christ, in the character of a Sun; for he like that body is *light itself*, in whatever point of view we consider that term: accordingly we are told by the Apostle John, that *God is light*, and in him is no darkness at all. 1 John 1. 5.—And as he is light itself, so also, he enlightens others,

others, accordingly we are told, that Christ is the light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, (John i. 9.) with the *light of nature*; and all his own people, in the work of regeneration, he enlightens with the *light of grace*: nor is there a single ray of *light* to be discovered, but what comes from Christ the sun of righteousness, alluded to in my text.

But as Christ the sun enlightens, so also he *warms* and *refreshes* the souls of his people; which he does, by shining upon them, whereby they are brought to discover the *love of God* towards them, and their personal interest in what Christ hath done and suffered for them: which makes their hearts glow with love towards him, and refreshes them, when they are weary.

And, as Christ warms and refreshes his people, so also he (the sun of righteousness,) makes them become *fruitful*: which happens in consequence of their union to him. Accordingly he tells his Disciples, I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. John xv. 5. From whence we may see, that the fruitfulness of Christ's Disciples is not the *cause*, but the *effect* of their union to him. — But

My text tells us moreover, that Christ is a *shield* to defend, as well as a *sun* to enlighten his people; and this also is no small mercy, as may be seen, when they consider the *number*, *power*, and *policy* of those enemies, which daily surround them. He defends his people,

By his righteousness,
By his blood;
By his fulness, and
By his perfections;

from all *condemnation* before God, from all the *punishment*, which their sins have deserved, and from

all their *spiritual*, as well as *temporal* enemies : therefore it is said for the encouragement of them, that no weapon that is formed against (them) shall prosper : *Isai. liv. 17.* because with favor, will the Lord compass them as with a shield. *Psalm. v. 12.*—But,

Having taken notice of what the Lord is to his people ; I proceed,

II. To take notice of what he hath Promised to give them, and these my text tells us, are

Grace and glory :

which two terms, contain all that they want to make them happy in this world, and in that which is to come.—Now, by the term *grace* in this text, we may either understand God's *free love and favor* towards his people ; or a *principle of divine life* within them, both of which were given them in Christ Jesus, before the world began. *2 Tim. i. 9.* But when it is said by the psalmist in my text, that the Lord will *give grace*, it includes not only the bestowment of it, in the work of regeneration ; but also every supply which they may stand in need of, after that time. And mark here christian, it is not said in my text, that the Lord *sells* grace, but that he *gives* it : he bestows it freely on his people, without money and without price. *Isai. lv. 1.*

And we are informed moreover in this text, that the Lord not only gives grace, but he *gives glory* also, the former is that which makes meet, or fit for the latter : nor did God ever give the *one*, to any person from whom he withheld the other.—Now, this kingdom of glory which God gives to his people, is prepared for them ; therefore we are told, that such will be addressed by the KING at the last, when, come, ye blessed of my Father, *inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the*

the world:—Matt. xxv. 34. and here we may see the truth of the Apostle's assertion; whom he *calls*, them he also *glorifies*. Rom. viii. 30.—But we are informed also in my text, now under consideration; that *no good thing will he (God) withhold from them that walk uprightly*.—Here we have the persons described as upright walkers. Now to walk uprightly, is to walk agreeable to the will of God, as revealed in the word of God: without leaning to *Antinomianism* on the one hand, or to *Legality* on the other; and thus to walk, is to walk as becometh the gospel of Christ.—

And we are informed in this text also, that from these characters, God will withhold no good things; but on the contrary, they shall have all things which are for their present, and everlasting good, bestowed upon them. But mark here brethren, God's people have not these things given them, for their upright walk, but *walking uprightly* describes the characters on whom God will bestow these good things.—And,

We may learn from hence, that whatsoever things God bestows upon his people, or permits to befall them, are all of them *good things*; for no good thing will he withhold from them: therefore if *prosperity* be good for them, they shall have it, and if *adversity* be good for them, that shall not be withheld; if *temptation*, *persecution*; or *afflictions* be good for them, God will not withhold them; but be not dismayed, christian, under them; for all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. Rom. viii. 28.

S E R M O N LXXV.

2 Corinthians iii. 17.

—Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

IN this chapter we find, that the Apostle's ministry is commended by the gifts and graces of these Corinthians to whom he wrote. We find also set forth herein the excellency of the Gospel ministry, above that of the law. In the *fifteenth* verse of the chapter, the Apostle speaks of the blindness of the Jews as a body of people cleaving to the law; and tells them, that unto this day the veil is upon their heart: nevertheless says he, when it, (that is, the heart) shall turn to the Lord, the veil (of darkness and ignorance) shall be taken away. Now says the Apostle, the Lord is that spirit; that is, that spirit who *takes away the veil* above-mentioned, and that *turns the heart to the Lord*—and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

In speaking on which words I shall shew you,

I. *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, and*

II. *What that Liberty is which such enjoy.*

First then, I am to shew you where the Spirit of the Lord is: now, by the *spirit of the Lord* in my text, there can be no doubt I think, of the *third person* of the ever blessed Trinity being intended.—Who as God is,

1. *Every where present*; for says David, if I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there, if I make

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my bed in Hell, behold, thou art there, if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me: well therefore might the Psalmist say, whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? for the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good: Prov. xv. 3. who also preserves, and provides for all the creatures which he hath made.——But besides the spirit of the Lord being in a *general and providential* manner in the world at large; he is,

2. In a *peculiar and gracious* manner in the hearts of his people, not observe, while they are in a *state of nature*, for then they are sensual, having not the spirit, (Jude ver. 19.) but in *effectual calling* he takes possession of their hearts; from which time, he dwelleth *with* them, and *in* them: John xiv. 17. here it is that he resides, in order

To quicken them,
To enlighten them,
To reprove them,
To guide them,
To sanctify them, and
To comfort them:

Agreeable to which ideas we are told, that it is the *spirit* that *quickeneth*: John vi. 63. That the Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: Psal. cxlviii. 8. that when he (the spirit) is come, he will *reprove*, or convince of sin, and *guide* his people into all truth: John xvi. 8, 13. and also, that he will *sanctify* their souls, 2 Thes. ii. 13. and *comfort* their minds, (John xiv. 16.) under the various trials and afflictions with which they meet, while they are passing through this world. From these observations we may see *where* the spirit of the Lord is, that is to say, in the world at large, as a God

of providence, and in the hearts of regenerate ones, as a God of grace.

I shall proceed now as proposed, to shew,

II. What that *Liberty* is, which such enjoy: for says my text, where the spirit of the Lord is, (that is to say in his *gracious operations*) there is liberty.—Under which head we may observe, that by this *liberty* we are not to understand a liberty to sin against God; nor do I think that a *regenerate man* would make that use of the term, whatever a licentious Antinomian might do.—But,

1. By this liberty we are to understand a liberty from the *curse of the law*; agreeable to which, the Apostle says, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; (Gal. iii. 13.) and the spirit is given as a quickening spirit, in consequence thereof.—Again, where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;

2. From their former *blindness and ignorance*; not only—Of themselves, and
Of God—but also

Of the way of salvation by Christ,

for wherever the spirit of the Lord is as an *enlightener*, such persons see themselves to be *lost*, *weak* and *helpless*, they are brought thereby to the knowledge of God, as *holy, just, and good*, according to the nature of that law, of which they have been transgressors: Rom. vii. 12. They discover moreover, the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, who not only *fulfilled the law*, but *suffered* *penally* also, on the behalf of all his people.

3. Where the spirit of the Lord is as a *sanctifier*, there is liberty also from the *bondage of sin* and the *captivity of Satan*; for all such are delivered out of the arms of the wicked one, and it is said of

them, that sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Rom. vi. 14.—We may observe also,

4. That where the spirit of the Lord is as a witnessing spirit, there is liberty

To love God,
To serve God, and
To praise Him:

For the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them: Rom. v. 5. and (they) being delivered out of the hand of (their) enemies, are enabled to serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of (their) life. Luke i. 74. 75. Their language is, bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases. Psal. ciii. 2, 3.—And,

5. Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty

To speak to God,
To speak of God, and
To speak for Him.

There is liberty to speak to God, in prayer and supplication; agreeable to which David says, for me, I will call upon God: (at) evening and morning, and at noon will I pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice. Psal. lv. 16, 17.—And as there is liberty to speak to God, so also there is liberty to speak of him: accordingly David says come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul: Psal. lxxvi. 16. and as there is liberty to speak of God, so likewise there is liberty to speak for him: for like *Elihu* of old, they can say, suffer me a little, and I will shew thee, that I have yet to speak on God's behalf. Job xxxvi. 2. Thus therefore we see, that where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

SERMO.

SERMON LXXVI.

Psalm cxlv. 11.

They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.

THIS psalm seems to have been written by David, after the Lord had granted him his requests, which he had made in the preceding psalms, and had given him present rest from his enemies.—He begins it with praising God on account of his greatness, which he tells us is unsearchable.—He then determines to speak of the wondrous works of the Lord, and begins at the eighth verse of the psalm, saying, the Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great mercy; the Lord (says he) is good to all, that is in a *providential* way, and his tender mercies are over all his works. And as he praises God and speaks of his wondrous works himself, so likewise he informs us in the words of my text, that others would do the same; for says he, they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.

In discoursing on these words, it will be necessary to point out,

I. Who *They* are, and

II. What *They* shall do.

First then, I am to point out to you, who the Persons are, that are alluded to in my text.—And here we may observe,

1. That *natural*, or *unconverted* men cannot be intended by, or included in this word **THEY**; because such know nothing of the kingdom nor the

power which are spoken of in my text; nor yet of that *glory* which belongs thereto; and therefore are not likely to speak of the one, nor to talk of the other in a scriptural and experimental manner.

But the *persons* alluded to in my text by the word **THEY**, are,

2. The *Saints of God*, as appears obviously from the words before my text, wherein it is said, and thy **SAINTS** shall bless thee. Now by the term *Saints*, sanctified people are undoubtedly intended; and be it remembered brethren, that people are not *born* Saints, but *made* so in *effectual calling*: in which work they are made partakers of a *divine nature*, (2 Pet. i. 4.) and are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works; (Eph. ii. 10.) for the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. iv. 24. after the image of him that created him: Col. iii. 10. and we find that the Apostle dedicates his Epistle, when writing to the Romans, to all that be at Rome *beloved of God, called to be Saints*, (Rom. i. 7.) not called because they were Saints, but called to be made Saints of: in which work of sanctification,

Life is communicated,

The understanding is *enlightened*,

The *will* is allured,

The *conscience* is purged,

The *affections* are turned Godward, and

The soul made *meet* for glory.

But I come now to point out to you,

II. What these People shall do.—My text tells us, they shall *speak* of the *glory* of thy *kingdom*, and *talk* of thy *power*.—Now we may observe,

1. That by the *kingdom* in my text, the *kingdom of God's grace* seems principally intended, in which kingdom Christ reigns as King over his Church.

Church: and the *glory* of this *kingdom* lies in *Christ*, in whom dwells all the fulness of the God-head bodily, Col. ii. 9. and in whom is deposited a *fulness* of *grace* for the supply of the wants of all his people; therefore says the Apostle, my God shall *supply* all your need, according to his riches in glory, by *Christ Jesus*. Phil. iv. 19. But the *glory* of this *kingdom* lies moreover in the *freeness* of God's bestowing the *blessings* of *grace*; for they all come to his people by *deed* of *gift*, even without money and without price, does God bestow them upon every *thirsty* soul. *Isai.* lv. 1. And as the *glory* of this *kingdom* consists in the *freeness* of God's *bestowing* these *blessings*, so also it does in the *certainty* of the *christian's* enjoying them; for since God hath promised that he will withhold no good thing from his people, every good thing shall most assuredly be given to them, while on their pilgrimage here below; for he that hath begun a good work in (them) will perform it until the day of *Jesus Christ*. Phil. i. 6.—But,

2. The Saints shall *speak* of this *glory*, they having an experimental knowledge of *Christ the King*, and being acquainted with the *fulness* of *grace* which is in him, together with his *freeness* in bestowing the *blessings* of *grace*; they are led to *speak* of them to others; to whom they say with *David* in another place, come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. *Psal.* lxxvi. 16. From which passage it evidently appears that God had done something for *David's soul*;—that *David* knew it, or was experimentally acquainted with it;—and that made him willing to declare it *openly* to all those who feared God; and in thus doing, he *spoke* of the *glory* of this *kingdom*, as also do all those who like *David* of old, declare to others what God hath done

done in a gracious way for them; and if men be brought into this kingdom of grace, they discover its glory and will *ſpeak* of it to others.

But my text tells us alſo,

3. They (that is the Saints) ſhall *talk of thy power*: they being experimentally acquainted with it, will be led to talk of it to others. They are acquainted with his *power* to *redeem* them completely from the *curſe* of the *law*, which he has done, by being made a curſe for them: (Gal. iii. 13.) and when they diſcover their intereſt in this *redemption*, they are led to ſpeak of it to thoſe who are about them.—

They are acquainted alſo, with the power of God to *quicken* and *regenerate* their ſouls: for they know that none can *raiſe the dead* but himſelf, nor can any other being whatſoever create them anew in Chriſt Jeſus, to enable them to hate ſin and to turn from it, or to love God and cleave unto him. As they therefore feel the power of God in this reſpect upon their hearts, they will be led to talk of it to others.—

But they are acquainted moreover with the power of God to *ſave them*; for Chriſt is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him; ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them. Heb. vii. 25. He not only ſaves them

From the *charge*, and
From the *puniſhment* of ſin; but alſo,
From the *guilt*,
From the *love*, and
From the *dominion* of it, yea,
He ſaves them with a preſent, and
With an *everlaſting* ſalvation:

And an experimental knowledge of theſe things conſtrains the Saints to *talk* of them to others: for *they ſhall talk of thy power*.

But again, they are persuaded also of the power of God to *keep them* amidst all their enemies here, and to *glorify* them hereafter. Agreeable to which, the Apostle says, I am persuaded that he (Christ) is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day. 2 Tim. i. 12. And this persuasion of God's power, constrains the Saints to talk of it, for the encouragement of others, and thus it is, that they speak of the glory of God's kingdom, and talk of his power.

SERMON LXXVII.

Hebrews ii. 11.

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one—

IN the former part of this chapter, the Apostle sets forth the christian's obligation to give heed to the doctrine of the gospel.—He then informs us, that the dominion of the world to come, was not given to the angels, but to Christ, who (we are told) was made a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death for his people; for it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many Sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.—For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one.

In discoursing on these words, I shall take notice—

- I. Of the *Sanctifier*,
- II. Of the *Sanctified*, and
- III. Of their *Oneness*.

First then, I am to take notice of the *Sanctifiers* by

by whom Christ doubtless is intended, who is the captain of salvation to his people. This appears plainly, I think, from the Apostle's words when writing to the Corinthians, where he says; but of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, *sanctification* and redemption. 1 Cor. i. 30. Mark the expression brethren, for there are great glory and beauty contained in it; for the Apostle reminds these *Corinthians* first, of their *choice* in Christ, which he tells them, is an act of God the Father, *but of him are ye in Christ Jesus*; he then informs them of what Christ is to them in consequence of that *choice*, for he of God is made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: all of which blessings flow to God's people, in consequence of their union to Christ their living head.

Now let it be remembered brethren, that to *sanctify*, (according to the meaning of my text,) signifies to *cleanse*, or to *purify*, which Christ does,

By his *Blood*, and

By his *Spirit*.

Accordingly we are told, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, 1 John i. 7. (that is to say, before God;) and it purges also the *conscience* of every believer in Christ Jesus, from dead works to serve the living God. Heb. ix. 14.

And as he sanctifies, or cleanses by his blood, so also he does by his *spirit*, which he communicates to all his people, in order to sanctify or cleanse them, from

The *love* of sin in their hearts, and

The *dominion* of it in their lives,

and thereby makes them meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light. Accordingly we are told, that God hath from the beginning chosen (his people) to salvation; through *sanctification* of the spirit

spirit and belief of the truth: 2 Thes. ii. 13. for which purpose it is, that of his fulness, they all receive, and grace for grace, John i. 16. and thus is Christ made of God unto all his people, *sanctification*.

I come now to take notice,

II. Of the *Sanctified*: under which head we may observe,

1. That they are all *the beloved of God*, for *sanctification* is a fruit of that love which God bears towards all his people, for said he, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee: Jer. xxxi. 3. In which passage, *drawing in* the work of sanctification, is evidently spoken of, as the effect of God's everlasting love towards his people.—But,

2. Those who are sanctified, are the *many sons* spoken of in the 10th verse of the chapter out of which my text is taken. They became, or were constituted sons, in the act of *adoption*; which is *a taking those into the relation of sons, and treating them as such, who are not so by nature or birth*: by which act it is, that all God's people became *heirs to grace here, and to glory hereafter*: for says the Apostle, if *children* (that is by adoption) then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: Rom. viii. 17. and because ye are *sons*, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, (to sanctify or purify you) and to enable you to cry, Abba Father. Gal. iv. 6.—But again they are,

3. *The brethren* spoken of in the following words to my text; which relationship Christ is not ashamed to own; for when speaking of these sanctified ones, the Apostle tells us, he is not ashamed to call them brethren, any more than he was, when he said unto Mary, go to my *brethren*, and say unto them, I ascend

ascend unto my Father, and to your Father, and to my God and your God: John xx. 17. and when addressing the women after his resurrection, he said unto them, be not afraid, go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. Matt. xxviii. 10.

But I proceed now to take notice,

III. Of their *Oneness*: for my text informs us, that both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of *one*. — And here let it be observed,

1. That they are all of *one family*: this is a name by which the church of God is called, by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians, where he says, for this cause I bow my knees unto the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole *family* in Heaven and in earth is named. Eph. iii. 14, 15. Hence it appears, that one part of the family is in *Heaven*, and the other part *upon the earth*, but both the parts put together, make but *one family*, to which Christ himself belongs, as appears from what is above observed.

And as they are all of one family, of which God is the father, John xx. 17. — So also,

2. They are all of *one body*. Agreeable to which idea, the Apostle tells us, when speaking of Christ, that he is the *head of the body*, the Church; Col. i. 18. in which passage the Apostle not only calls the Church a *body*, but informs us also, that Christ is the *head* thereof, proving thereby, that both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of *one*; therefore says Christ to his members, because I live, you shall live also. John xiv. 19. And as both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one *family*, and of one *body*; so likewise they are,

3. All of *one mind*: for all those who are sanctified

tified have the mind which was also in Christ Jesus, and are minded to be followers of God as dear children. Eph. v. 1. And as Christ did the will of him that sent him; so also his sanctified ones are minded to imitate him, and thereby (in their measure) to walk as he also walked. 1 John ii. 6. From these considerations then it evidently appears, that both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one family, of one body, and of one mind.

SERMON LXXVIII.

Jeremiah xxxiii. 3.

Call upon me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

THIS chapter is a continuation of prophecies of spiritual blessings to the Church of Christ in gospel times, of which the return of the Jews from their captivity and the benefits following thereupon, were types.—The first verse of this chapter informs us of the place, where Jeremiah had this prophecy communicated to him, namely in the prison. The second gives us an account of the author of it, namely, Jehovah, who addresses the Prophet in the words of my text, saying, call upon me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

And now on which words, I shall take notice,
I. Of the *Exhortation* given, and
II. Of the *Promises* made.

First then, I am to take notice of the *Exhortation*.

tion given, it is contained in these words—call upon me—in which we may observe,

The Speaker, and

The Person spoken to.

The speaker is no other than the Lord himself, as appears by the words immediately before my text, and therefore due attention ought to be given to what he says—the person spoken to, is the *Prophet Jeremiah*, as is obvious from the first verse of the chapter, who no doubt, was a man *quickened, or regenerated* by the spirit of God; and had the eyes of his understanding illuminated, and to whom a spirit of grace and supplications was given. Now this gracious man is exhorted, or directed in my text by the Lord himself, to *call upon him*. But as whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; Rom. xv. 4. this exhortation ought to be attended to, by all God's *regenerate ones*, in every age of the world; to all of whom he says, *call upon me* in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me: Psa. l. 15 and again he says, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely. Cant. ii. 14. They have to call upon God

For protection in danger,

For deliverance out of it,

For fresh supplies of grace, and

For discoveries of pardoning love:

all of which, an awakened sinner who is made sensible of his own utter inability to protect and deliver himself, or supply his own wants, will be led to apply unto God for, both in public and in private.

They will call upon God *feelingly*,

They will call upon him *seriously*, and

They will call upon him *frequently*.

But let us proceed now,

II. To the *Promises made*.—Which are contained in these words, *I will answer thee*,—and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.—Now as God promised to answer the *Prophet* when he called upon him; this promise stands equally for the encouragement of all his own people in every age of the world: and implies,

1. *Attention to them*, or *mindfulness of them*: Accordingly we are told, that the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: 1 Peter iii. 12. and again we are informed, that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect (or upright) toward him; 2 Chron. xvi. 9. both which passages clearly prove God's attention to, or mindfulness of his people.

But these words *I will answer thee*, imply moreover,

2. God's *love* to his people, this being the source of all the *promises*, which are left upon record, as well as of all the *blessings* which are contained therein, and as his love constrained him to *make them*, so also his faithfulness binds him to *fulfil them*, which he doth for his own glory, as well as for his people's good.—Hence we may learn, that all the Christian's comforts depend upon his resting, or relying upon the faithfulness of

A promise-making,

A promise-keeping, and

A promise-fulfilling God:

for if Satan once get him to doubt of God's faithfulness, all his comforts die in proportion thereto: this therefore is a subject which God's ministers ought frequently to insist upon, because it is a subject which God's people are frequently brought to doubt of.

But again, these words *I will answer thee*, imply also,

3. The *certain deliverance* of all God's people, out of all their *troubles, difficulties and dangers*, with which they may be surrounded, as well as out of the hands of all their enemies: for which purpose it is, that the Lord is a *shield* round about them, Gen. xv. i. and on which account it is that he hath said to them, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*. Heb. xiii. 5.

But let us proceed now to take notice of the *other promise* which we meet with in this text now under consideration; it is contained in these words, *and shew thee great and mighty things*, (or as the margin reads it, (*hidden things*) *which thou knowest not*.—Now by these great and mighty, or hidden things; *spiritual blessings* are intended, or the deep things of the gospel; as obviously appears from the 8th, 15th, and 16th verses of this chapter, out of which my text is taken, where it is said by the Lord himself, *I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me*.—In those days, and in that time, (saith the Lord) *I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgement and righteousness in the land*.—And in those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely, and this is the name wherewith he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**.

Now if we apply this part of our subject to awakened sinners, we may observe, that there are *some things* which the Lord hath shewn them, and of which they have an *experimental knowledge*, such for instance as—their lost *state* and condition—their own *sinfulness*,—and their utter *inability* to help themselves, &c. But then there are still some great

and mighty things which are hidden from them and unknown by them, and which the Lord promises to shew or reveal to them, for their comfort, and his own glory.

These I presume, are the great and leading truths of the gospel, such as

God's everlasting love,
Eternal and personal election,
Pardon by the blood of Christ, and
Justification by his righteousness,

these things though they are hid from the wise and prudent, yet the Lord reveals them unto babes, Matt. xi. 25. together with the *fulness* which there is in Christ, as well as the *certainly* of their glorification by him.—These great and mighty things the quickened sinner under his first awakenings is unacquainted with, but says the Lord, in the words of my text, call upon me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not:—that is, his personal interest in the above-mentioned blessings.

SERMON LXXIX.

Isaiah xliii. 21.

This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

IN this chapter the Lord comforts his people under their various afflictions, with many precious promises which are contained herein.—He asserts in it also, his proper deity, in opposition to the idols of the nations, and promises his people deliverance from *Babylon*, and a greater redemption than that, one branch of which, is the forgiveness of sin.—

G. g 3.

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The Lord then claims his interest in his people, and promises them his presence in the midst of all their afflictions, saying in the words of my text, *this people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise.*

In speaking on which words, I shall,

- I. Take notice of *this People*, and
- II. Of what is said of *them*.

First, as to the *People* spoken of in my text, they are described in the preceding verse as—

The *Beasts*, of the fields,
The *Dragons*, and
The *Owls*.

Which expressions are not to be understood *literally* of these creatures, but *spiritually* of the Gentiles: and however *degrading* the above appellations may be to human nature, yet all men in a state of nature are comparable to the above-mentioned creatures.

1. David says in one place, so foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee: Psal. lxxiii. 22. and the Apostle also, when writing to the Corinthians says, if, (speaking) after the manner of men, I have fought with *beasts* at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? 1 Cor. xv. 32. Now by these *beasts*, there can be no doubt, I think, but *men*, who are filthy, brutish and unclean, are intended thereby.—But,

2. Men in a state of nature, may be compared also to *dragons*, on account of the *serpentine*, *fiery*, and *cruel* disposition of which those creatures are possessed; which disposition may be discovered also in unconverted men, when they are opposing God and persecuting and oppressing his children: in doing which, they are said to eat up his people as they eat bread. Psal. xiv. 4.

And

And as natural men may be compared to *beasts* and to *dragons*, so likewise they may be compared,

3. To *Owls*, on account of the *stupidity* of those creatures, and their particular *attachment* to *darkness*. Agreeable to which ideas it is said, the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people do not consider: *Isai. i. 3.* intimating, no doubt, that there is more *ignorance* and more *stupidity* to be found in man, than there is in either the *ox*, or the *ass*.—And we are told moreover, that men (that is men in a state of nature) loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. *John iii. 19.* Now be it remembered brethren, that the Lord says, these *beasts*, *dragons*, and *owls*, (or men comparable to those creatures) *shall honor him*; for which purpose we find, *he gives waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert*: by which we are to understand the *gospel* and its *ordinances*, as well as the *spirit* and his *graces*; which are compared to waters and rivers for their abundance, and for their comforting, reviving, and sanctifying nature. And this he does for the sake of *his people*, whom he calls *his chosen*, who were mixed among the above-mentioned *beasts*, *dragons*, and *owls*, and whom he meant to call by his grace, notwithstanding they partook of the same nature with the others amongst whom they were mixed.

But this leads me to take notice,

II. Of what is said of them: under which head we may observe,

1. That these people were a *formed* people.—By which expression we are not only to take into our view their first formation or creation; but also their regeneration, or new creation; which is a work that is wrought in all *God's people*, in consequence

quence of their being *his chosen* ones.—But,

2. We are informed in this text also, *by whom* this work was done, and here mark brethren, it was not done by these beasts, dragons, and owls themselves, and therefore they had no right to the glory thereof: but it was done, we find, by the LORD himself; for he tells us, this people HAVE I FORMED.—Agreeable to which the Apostle Paul says, we are his workmanship created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. Eph. ii. 10. And indeed none can create but God, and therefore he ought to have all the glory, because it is he only who doth all the work.—Again,

3. My text informs us likewise, *for whom* he formed this people, namely, for HIMSELF; as he does also all those, whom he regenerates, or creates anew, this expression therefore proves the *final perseverance* of all the Saints; for if he create them for himself, it is utterly impossible for Satan to get any of them; for were it not so, God would be disappointed of his design in forming them, or creating them anew: but that is impossible, for says Christ, (when speaking of his sheep) they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. John x. 28. Blessed be God for this soul-comforting portion of his precious word.

But we may observe moreover,

4. The *end* for which God forms his people, it is set forth in these words, namely, *they shall shew forth my praise*.—Agreeable to which the Apostle Peter says, but ye are a *chosen* generation, a *royal* priesthood, an *holy* nation, a *peculiar* people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. 1 Peter ii. 9. Mark, brethren, they are in consequence of their being a *chosen* generation, and a *peculiar* people, called out of darkness into marvellous light, in order that they may shew forth his praises.

praises—so also we may observe in any text, now under consideration; that his people, his chosen ones, are formed for himself, in order that they may shew forth his praise, that is to say, the praise of the *Father* for loving, choosing, and blessing them in Christ:—the praise of the *Son* for working out a righteousness, and redeeming them;—and the praise of the *Spirit* for forming them anew, and making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.—They *shall* shew forth his praise *in their lives*, by attending to his service, and devoting themselves to him.—They shall shew forth his praise *at death*, in consequence of the discoveries of his love to them:—and they shall shew forth his praise in another and better world, even for ever and ever.

SERMON LXXX.

Ecclesiastes ix. 14, 15, 16.

There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it.—Now, there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.—Then said I, wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not heard.

WITHOUT any introduction to this passage, I shall take notice,

- I. Of this *Little City*,
- II. Of the *Great King*,
- III. Of the *Deliverer*, and
- IV. Of the *Ingratitude of the Delivered*.

First

First then, I am to take notice of this *Little City* which is spoken of in my text; by which we may understand *the Church of God*, which is frequently called by that name. Accordingly our Lord when addressing his Disciples, compares them to a *city* that is set on an hill, which cannot be hid: Matt. v. 14. and in the Song of Solomon, we find the Church called by the same name, where it is said, I will arise now and go about the *city*. Song iii. 2.—Now we may observe,

1. That every *city* has a *foundation* for its support; and so likewise has the Church of God: therefore thus saith the Lord God; behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, (Isai. xxviii. 16.) and that this *stone* is Christ, appears obviously from what the Apostle says, other foundations can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. iii. 11.

But we may observe,

2. That cities are commonly walled round for the safety of their inhabitants; and so is the Church of God: accordingly it is said, we have a *strong city*, salvation will God appoint for *walls* and bulwarks (Isai. xxvi. 1. and again, the Lord says, when speaking of his Church, I will be unto her a wall of fire round about. Zech. ii. 5. From which passages it evidently appears, that God's people are safe in the midst of all their enemies.—But,

3. In a *city* there are *watchmen* appointed to go about it, and so there are in the Church of God. Agreeable to which idea it is said, the watchmen that go about the *city* found me. Song iii. 3. Now, one part of a *watchman's* business is to give the alarm in case of danger; for I, says the Lord, have made thee a *watchman* unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give

them warning from me. Ezek. iii. 17. So that if the Church of God be exposed to danger, from *errors* or *enemies*; it is the *minister's* business to warn his people thereof.—And we may observe,

4. That in all *cities* there is a *chief magistrate*, or *governor*: so there is also in the Church of God: for we are told, that the government shall be upon (Christ's) shoulders; (Isa. ix. 6.) who is called by the Apostle, the *only potentate*, or *governor*, (1 Tim. vi. 15.) of the world in general, and of his Church in particular.—And,

5. Cities are generally well stored with *provisions*, and so likewise is the Church of God—there is no want of *food*, for Christ is the *bread of life*, John vi. 35. and his flesh is *meat* indeed: John vi. 35.—there is no want of *grace* in him, for out of his substance it is, that all God's people receive, and grace for grace: John i. 16. and the Apostle Paul sums up the whole, saying, my God shall *supply all your need*, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Phil. iv. 19.

But my text tells us, that this city of which I have been speaking, is a *little one*, and but *few men* within it: and if we compare the Church of God in particular, with the bulk of mankind in general; we shall find it to be as it is expressed in the words of my text.

If we take a view of this *city*, or Church of God;

1. *Before the flood*, we shall find it but a very little one indeed: for there were only *Noah*, and his *sons*, and his *wife*, and his *son's wives*, who went into the ark. Gen. vii. 7. Agreeable to which the Apostle Peter when speaking of the preparation of the ark, says, wherein *few*, that is, *eight souls*, were saved by water. 1 Pet. iii. 20.

But

But we may observe also,

2. That if we take a view of this *city*, at the time of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, we shall still find it but a very *little one*, for when *Abraham* was pleading with the Lord on the behalf of those cities, he told him; if *ten* righteous people could be found therein, he would spare the cities for the sake of those ten; (Gen. xviii. 32) but for lack of ten, we find those cities were destroyed; which clearly proves the Church of God to be very small.—As,

3. Does also our Lord's address to his Disciples, where he says, fear not, *little flock*, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom: Luke xii. 32. and could we even at this time separate real christians from the rest of mankind, we should still find this *city*, to be a *little one*, and but *few men* within it.

But I come now to take notice,

II. Of the *Great King*—by whom *Satan* is doubtless intended, who is called by that name in Revelations ix. 11.—he is called also by our Lord, the *prince* of this world. John xii. 31. But he is called in my text,

1. A *Great King*, on account of
The great number of his subjects,
Of his great power, and
Of his great policy

with which he acts, and with which he governs them.—And,

2. We are informed also, that this *great king* came against it, and besieged it, which he did
In *Adam*, and
In *Christ*, as he does also,
In every member.

He beset this *city* in *Adam*, by tempting him to
break

break the law which his maker had given him! Gen. iii. 4, 5, 6.—He beset it in Christ, by influencing *Herod* to destroy all the children that were in Bethlehem, from two years old and under: Matt. ii. 16.—and he besets it now in all the members of Christ: accordingly says the Apostle, there hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man. 1 Cor. x. 13.—But we are told,

1. That he built great *bulwarks* against it, called by the Apostle, Satan's strong holds. 2 Cor. x. 4. There are for instance, the bulwarks of *pride*,—of *ignorance*;—of *enmity*,—and of *unbelief*:—which bulwarks Satan raises, thinking to keep possession of this city, but a stronger than he, comes and delivers it. I must leave the remainder of my subject till another opportunity.

SERMON LXXXI.

Ecclesiastes ix. 14, 15, 16.

There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it.—Now, there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.—Then said I, wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not heard.

In a former discourse on these words, I proposed to take notice,

- I. Of this *Little City*,
- II. Of the *Great King*,
- III. Of the *Deliverer*, and
- IV. Of the *Ingratitude of the Delivered*.

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The two former of these have been attended to: I come now therefore to take notice,

III. Of the *Deliverer*;—by whom we may understand the God-man Christ Jesus, who in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, is called by that name; for it is said, there shall come out of Zion the *deliverer*, and shall turn away *ungodlings* from Jacob. Rom. xi. 26.—Now we may observe,

1. That Christ was a *man*, this I presume is doubted by none, who call themselves christians, for when the Apostle is speaking of the one mediator between God and man, he calls him the *Man Christ Jesus*. 1 Tim. ii. v. But lest any should conceive of him to be man *only*; the same Apostle tells us, that the first man, (that is Adam) is of the earth, earthy; the second man, (that is Christ) is THE LORD FROM HEAVEN. 1 Cor. xv. 47.

But,

2. My text tells us also, that he was a *poor man*.—This appears obviously from his own words to the Scribe, who came unto him, and said, master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest: and Jesus said unto him, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head. Matt. viii. 19, 20.—The Apostle also, when speaking of Christ, says, for ye know the grace (or love) of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became *poor*. 2 Cor. viii. 9. From which passages it evidently appears that Christ was a *poor man*: and it does also from Matthew xvii. 27. But we have to observe,

3. That he was a *wise man* also: according to the Prophet Isaiah, when speaking of him says, there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots:—and

spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding. *Isai. xi. 1, 2.*—It is said also in the Gospel of St. Luke; that the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, *filled with wisdom*, and the grace of God was upon him:—accordingly we are informed, that he was found in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions: and all that heard him were astonished at his *understanding and answers*: *Luke ii. 40, 46, 47.* and the Apostle Paul, when speaking of Christ, says, in (him) are hid all the treasures of *wisdom and knowledge*. *Col. ii. 3.* From hence then it appears, that he was a *wise man*; as it does also from the various *answers* which he gave to those of his adversaries who tried to entangle him in his talk; as well as to others with whom he conversed on different subjects: well therefore might the officers of the chief Priests and Pharisees say, never man spake like this man. *John vii. 46.* But this *poor wise man* we are told,

4. Was found in the city, for in fact he is one of the citizens, he is the *foundation stone* of this city, as well as the *corner stone* thereof: he is the *head* of the body the Church; as well as the *saviour* of that body. He was found there by *God the Father*, who exalted him as one chosen out of the people, *Psalm lxxxix. 19.* for the purpose of delivering them: Therefore it is said,

5. That he by his wisdom delivered the city; that is, the Church of God; which he has delivered

From all *iniquity*,
From the *curse* of the law,
From *wrath* to come,
From an *evil world*, and
From *Satan* the God of it,

who blinds the minds of them which believe not,
Let the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, should
H h. 2 shine

shine unto them. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Now in all this deliverance, there is a display of infinite wisdom; for
 It glorifies the *perfections* of God,
 It mortifies *Satan*,
 It *saves sinners*, and yet
 Condemns *sin*.

I come now to take notice,

IV. Of the *Ingratitude* of the *Delivered*; under which head we may observe,

1. That *no man remembered that same poor man*, notwithstanding the deliverance which he wrought out.—Now this applies to all the redeemed of the Lord, before their *regeneration*, as well as others; for they having the same corrupt nature as others have, are, (while under the influence thereof) equally as *ungrateful* as others are; and such is their ingratitude, that not one of them remembers Christ, either

To thank him,
 To love him,
 To live to him, or,
 To give glory to him,

and even among those who are called by grace, there are none that remember him as they ought to do.—But we are informed also,

2. That the poor man's *wisdom* is despised; that is, the wisdom from whence salvation flowed. This is sure to be the case with all those who are

Strangers to God, and
 Strangers to themselves:

because they are then strangers to the *necessity* of salvation by Christ, and therefore they despise the wisdom from whence it flows: for the natural man receiveth (or perceiveth) not the things of the Spirit of God, (that is, the things which the Spirit of God reveals in his word) and the reason we

old is, because they are *foolishness* unto him; 1 Cor. ii. 14. therefore it is, that the wisdom of man is so often set up in opposition to the wisdom of God.—But we are told moreover,

3. That *his words* are not *heard*, that is, regarded, or attended to, no not by any man while he remains in a state of nature, but they are set at naught, and totally neglected by them. Accordingly it is said by wisdom, (or Christ) I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: Prov. i. 24, 25, and we may observe here also, that his words are too little *heard*, or *attended to*, even by those who are called by grace; many of whom are too apt to neglect *reading* God's word, as they are also to neglect *hearing* it preached; which is certainly a display of *ingratitude* in them: but every neglecter of God's word would do well to remember, that there will be some who will *mourn* at the *end*, when their flesh and their body are consumed, and say, how have I *hated instruction*, and my heart despised *reproof*; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that *instructed me*.—But may the Lord grant *reader*, that this may never be thy woful lamentation,

SERMON LXXXII.

Ecclesiastes ii. 26.

*For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight;
wisdom, knowledge and joy.—*

[N order to prevent (as much as possible) the Scriptures from being misapplied, it is always necessary for us to take notice of the characters, to whom

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whom any part of them belongs, that each may receive his portion in due season.

Therefore in speaking on the words of my text, I shall,

- I. Describe to you the *good Man*, and
- II. Take notice of *What* is said of him.

First, I am to describe to you the *good Man*—
And here let it be observed,

1. That I have not now to do with the man that is good in his *own eyes*, though there are many such to be found in the world, for the wise man tells us, there is a *generation* that is pure (or good) in their *own eyes*; and yet are not *washed* from their *filthiness*. Prov. xxx. 12. And, as I have not to do with a man that is good in his own eyes; so neither have I to do,

2. With one that is good in the eyes of *other men*; many of whom no doubt, are to be found in the world, among professors of religion. Of this number (I presume) Simon was one, of whom it is said that he believed and was *baptized*. Acts viii. 13. which he would not have been had he not been a good man in the eyes of others, who we find were deceived in him, for he is afterwards declared by the Apostle, to be in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Acts viii. 23. But the man with whom I have to do is,

3. One that is good in *God's sight*, who can never be deceived in this, nor in any other manner whatsoever. Now in order to constitute a man *good* in *God's sight*, it is necessary that he should be *free from the charge of sin*: for that man to whom sin is charged, never was nor never will be a *good man* in *God's sight*; therefore it is, that all the *chosen* and *redeemed* of the Lord, have their sins charged

charged to Christ their surety: accordingly we are told by the Prophet Isaiah, that the Lord, (that is God the Father) hath laid on Christ the iniquity of them all. *Isai. liii. 6.* The Apostle also informs us, that God was in Christ reconciling the world (that is his own people in every nation) unto himself, *not imputing their trespasses to them*; now, as where no sin is charged or imputed, no punishment as a penalty can be inflicted, well might this same Apostle say, blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin. *Rom. iv. 8.*

But, for a man to be good in God's sight; it is necessary likewise that he should have a *righteousness to justify him before God*: therefore it was, that Christ came into this lower world in order to work one out: agreeable to which it is said, Christ is (or went to) the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that *believeth*; *Rom. x. 4.* which none but his own people ever did, or ever will do; for says Christ to some of the Jews of old, ye believe not; *because ye are not of my sheep.* *John x. 26.* But as Christ wrought this righteousness out for his people, so also the Father imputes it to them: agreeable to which the Apostle says, blessed is the man unto whom God *imputeth righteousness without works*: *Rom. iv. 6.* Christ therefore having wrought out a *righteousness* for his people, and borne the charge and punishment of their sins in his own body on the tree, *1 Peter ii. 24.* they stand as innocent in the sight of God, as though they had never broken his law; for who shall lay any thing to the charge of GOD'S ELECT? *Rom. viii. 33.*

But every man that is good in God's sight, experiences moreover the *work of the Spirit within him*, in order to make him meet for communion with God here, and for the enjoyment of him hereafter. Accordingly we find, that this work is called

called by the Apostle, a *good work*; Phil. i. 6. not only because it is performed by the *good spirit* of God, but also because there is communicated to those in whom it is wrought, a *good principle* which enables them to act in a *good manner*, and to a good end.—I come now,

II. To take notice of *What* is said of this *good Man*; my text tells us, that God will give unto him, *wisdom, knowledge and joy*. We may observe,

1. That to a man that is good in God's sight, he will give *wisdom*; by which we are not to understand here, *worldly wisdom*, which we are told is foolishness with God, 1 Cor. iii. 19. and that by which the world knew not God: 1 Cor. i. 21. but by this wisdom we are to understand *spiritual wisdom*, even that which cometh from above, (James iii. 17.) and makes men wise unto salvation; and of all such it is said, the wise shall inherit glory, Prov. iii. 35. Now as God giveth to all his own people wisdom at *first*, so also he supplies them with it, at every *after period* of their lives; therefore it is said in the Epistle of St. James, if any of you lack (or feel the want of more) wisdom let him ask of God—and it shall be given him. James i. 5. But as God giveth wisdom, so also

2. He giveth *knowledge*; he gives all his own people to know *themselves* to be *lost, guilty, helpless* and *undone* sinners—he brings them also to the knowledge of *Christ*, in his *offices* and *characters* which he sustains in his word—as he does also to the knowledge of that *salvation* which he hath wrought out; which is a salvation from the curse of the law—from all iniquity—from wrath to come—from the guilt of sin in the conscience—from the love of it in the heart—and from the dominion of

in the life.—He gives them the knowledge of the *doctrines of grace*; as well as of the *grace* which those doctrines exhibit to their view.—

And we are told, that God not only giveth wisdom and knowledge;—but that,

3. He giveth *joy* likewise, which is a fruit, or production of the spirit of God; Gal. v. 22. and is experienced in a way of believing: for (says the Apostle) the God of hope fill you with all *joy* and peace in believing. Rom. xv. 13. This undoubtedly, is the true *spiritual joy* which the christian partakes of, under the *discoveries* of God's love to his soul, and his *personal interest* in what Christ hath done and suffered for him, and is a joy in, (or excited by) the Holy Ghost; Rom. xiv. 17. a *joy unspeakable* and full of glory. 1 Peter i. 8. And all *those* to whom God giveth *wisdom, knowledge and joy here*; shall rejoice with him hereafter in another and better world for ever and ever.

SERMON LXXXIII.

Psalm lxix. 4.

—Then I restored that which I took not away.

IN this psalm we may observe, that a single person is spoken of, and also, that this person is in *for-mal* and *suffering* circumstances. Now what is said of him, cannot be said of any other person but the *Messiah*: and that the psalm belongs to Christ, is evident from the use which is made of it in the New Testament.—In the verse out of which my text is taken, we find him complaining to his Father of the *hatred, number, and power* of his enemies,

mies, saying, they that hate me without a cause, are more than the hairs of my head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty—*then I restored that which I took not away.*

In which words three things are observable;

- I. A *Robbery* implied,
- II. A *Restitution* made, and
- III. A *Time* alluded to.

First, let us attend to the *Robbery* implied.—Now in this robbery *Satan*, the serpent spoken of in Genesis 3d, had undoubtedly a hand, as appears from the first six verses of that chapter, where we find him using his craft and subtilty, to involve our first parents in sin and rebellion against God, as well as in that misery which is the consequence thereof: and so far did he prevail by his artful insinuations, that the woman we are told, took and did eat of the fruit of which God had said, ye shall not eat; and gave also unto her husband and he did eat likewise. In which act the robbery, of which I am now speaking was committed, and God might justly have complained on this occasion as he does in Malachi's Prophecy; where it is said, will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me. Mal. iii. 8. Now in this robbery committed as above; God is robbed—Of his honor and glory,

Of man's affections,

Of man as a companion, and

Man alas, is robbed of all that he possessed.

We may observe,

- I. That God is robbed of his honor and glory, for there could not be a greater honor put upon *Satan* the father of lies, John viii. 44. than for our first parents to believe what he said, in preference

to what a God of truth had said unto them ; by this mean they robbed God of that *glory* which was due to him, and gave it to Satan who had no right thereto.—But,

2. God was *robbed* also of *man's affections*, who are by nature, become *alienated* and enemies to God in their minds, by wicked works, (Col. i. 21.) and instead of his being loved supremely, or above all others, their affections are fixed upon the world and the things of the world, and they love the *creature*, more than the *creator*.—Again,

3. God is *robbed* moreover of *man* as a *companion*: for no sooner did he sin against his maker, but a disagreement took place between them ; and how can two walk together, except they be agreed ? Amos iii. 3. Accordingly we find that a separation (that is, from communion) was the consequence, for it is said, that God drove out the man, (that is Adam) from the garden in which he had placed him, and where he had enjoyed sweet familiarity with his maker. Gen. iii. 24.

But we have to observe,

4. That *man* also is robbed of all that he possessed, he is robbed

Of his *life* and become *dead*,
Of his *light* and become *blind*,
Of his *wisdom* and become a *fool*,
Of his *righteousness* and become a *criminal*,
Of his *purity* and become *unholy*,
Of his *God* and become *lonely*,
Of his *strength* and become *helpless*, and
Of his *happiness* and become *miserable*.

But let us proceed,

II. To take notice of the *Restitution* made, this was undoubtedly done by *Christ*, on the behalf of *his people*, on which account he may be stiled the
repairer

repairer of that breach.—Now under this head we may observe, that Christ restored

Glory to God, and

Holiness, peace, and happiness to his people;
neither of which were taken away by him.

1. He restored *glory to God*; this he did by working out a *righteousness*, and making an *atone-ment* for sins which he never committed, and thereby he satisfied justice which he never had injured; and thus he wrought out complete *deliverance* for all his own people, and that too in such a way, as that all the *divine perfections* are glorified thereby. Accordingly we find that at the appearance of Christ in this lower world, the Angels sang, *glory to God in the highest*: Luke ii. 14. and though mercy flows to all the redeemed of the Lord; yet it is perfectly agreeable to strict justice, for God is just and (yet) the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus? Rom. iii. 26. and such is the *glory* of the plan of salvation, that mercy and truth are knit together; righteousness and peace have killed each other. Psal. lxxxv. 10.

But we may observe again, that as Christ restored *glory to God*, by obeying the law and suffering its penalty on the behalf of his people; so also, in consequence thereof, he, in *regeneration* turns their affections to himself, and they are restored to communion with their maker. In doing which, he restores

Life to the dead,

Light to the blind,

Wisdom to the ignorant

Purity to the unholy, and

Peace to the distressed;

accordingly we find, that another part of the Angels' Doxology was at the coming of Christ, *peace, good-will towards men*: Luke ii. 14. From these

these considerations it appears, that Christ restored that which he took not away.

But this leads me,

III. To take notice of the *Time* alluded to, by the word *Then*, for my text says, *then* I restored that which I took not away.

Now be it remembered brethren,

1. That this was done by *promise*, when Christ entered into covenant with his Father, and said, *lo, I come to do thy will, O God*: Heb. x. 9. Which was to work out a righteousness for his people, and to die for their sins, and thereby restore *glory* to God, and to make *peace* by the blood of his cross, neither of which he had taken away.—But,

2. This was not *actually* done, till Christ *actually* suffered on Calvary's mount, where he laboured under the ponderous load of his people's sins, which were *charged* to him; and where he bore the *punishment* of them, in his own body on the tree, *then* it was that Christ restored that *glory* to God, which he took not away.

In consequence of which it is,

3. That he restores *holiness*, *peace* and *happiness* to the souls of his people, and should any ask when this is done? I answer, when God regenerates their hearts, and brings them to believe in Jesus, when the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, and they enjoy *peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ—then also it is, that Christ restores that which he took not away.

SERMON LXXXIV.

Daniel ii. 28.

But there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets.

THIS chapter contains an account of a dream which *Nebuchadnezzar* had, on which he called his Magicians and Astrologers together, in order to interpret it; threatening them with death if they did not, and promising them a reward if they did.—They urged the unreasonableness of the demand, and the impossibility of the thing, which so displeased the King, that he ordered their destruction. *Daniel* however went to the King, and desired time, and he would shew to him the interpretation of the dream; for says he, *there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets*—to this God therefore *Daniel* prayed, who revealed to him the secret in a night-vision, and he in consequence thereof blessed the God of Heaven.

In speaking on the words of my text, I shall take notice,

- I. Of the *Affertion*, there is a God in Heaven, and
- II. Of what is *said* of him.

First then, I am to take notice of the *Affertion*—*there is a God in Heaven*: from whence we may learn, that *Daniel* was not one of those wicked fools who say in their hearts *there is no God*: (*Psal. xiv. 1.*) but he was one who was well persuaded both of his *existence*, and the *perfections* of his nature;—And here we may observe,

1. That this God, of whom *Daniel* speaks, is God of *wisdom* and *knowledge*: therefore says *Hannah*, talk no more so exceeding proud, let not arrogant

arrogancy come out of your mouth : for the Lord is a God of *knowledge*, and by him actions are weighed. 1 Sam. ii. 3.—Again,

2. This God, to whom Daniel prayed, is a *just God*: accordingly he says, there is no God else beside me; a *just God* and a Saviour. Isai. xlv. 21.

But,

3. This God, in whom Daniel trusted, is a *powerful God*: therefore it is said, that all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing : and he doth according to his will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth ; and none can stay his hand, or say, what doest thou ? Dan. iv. 35.

For,

4. This God, of whom I am speaking, is a *great God*: therefore says David, *great* is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness : Psal. xlviii. 1. and again he says, for thou art *great* and doest wondrous things, thou art God alone. Psal. lxxxvi. 10.

5. The God spoken of by Daniel, is a *good and merciful God*: accordingly we are informed by David, that *good and upright* is the Lord ; therefore will he teach sinners in the way : Psal. xxv. 8. and again he tells us, for thou Lord art *good*, and ready to forgive ; and *plenteous in mercy* unto all them that call upon thee. Psal. lxxxvi. 5.—But,

6. The God of Heaven spoken of in my text, is a *faithful God*. Accordingly we find him declaring, my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips : Psal. lxxxix. 34. and the Apostle Paul, when writing to the Hebrews says, *it is impossible for God to lie* : Heb. vi. 18. therefore whatsoever he says, either with respect to the righteous, or the wicked, must most assuredly come to pass.

7. This God, of whom I now speak, is a *holy* God: as appears obviously from his own words when speaking to Moses, who was directed to say unto the congregation of the children of Israel, ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy. Levit. xix. 2. Hannah also declares in her song, that there is none *holy* as the Lord: 1 Sam. ii. 2. and David tells us, that the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and *holy* in all his works. Psal. cxlv. 17. And,

8. This God, who dwelleth in the Heavens, is a God of *love*, therefore says the Apostle John, God is LOVE. 1 John iv. 8. He is loving to every man in a way of providence; but he loves his people with a *peculiar love*, which is manifested by his bestowing upon them *peculiar blessings*.

But I must proceed now to take notice,

II. Of what is *said* of this God, my text tells us, that *he revealeth secrets*, and he is capable of doing this, because he knoweth all things: for says David, thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising, and understandest my thought afar off—and art acquainted with all my ways: for there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Psal. cxxxix, 2, 3, 4.

But let us attend to some of these secrets, which the Lord is pleased to reveal to his people. Here we may observe,

I. That as he knoweth the secrets of the heart (Psal. xlv. 21.) so also he reveals to his regenerate people those secret things, which are contained therein. He makes known to them, the *pride*—the *hypocrisy*—the *unbelief*—and the *deceitfulness* of men's hearts. All of which were hidden from them while they were in nature's darkness, but being called by grace, are now revealed to them; and

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they are brought to confess them, and to cry to this revealer of secrets, in order to have them subdued.

But we may observe again,

2. That this God, who is in *Heaven*, may be called a revealer of secrets, because he reveals to his people who are called by grace, the secret of his *love and favor*: for says the psalmist, the *secret* of the Lord is with them that fear him; Psal. xxv. 14. by which *secret* his peculiar love and favor towards them are undoubtedly intended.—Now this *secret* is made known, or revealed to his people, in the work of *regeneration*; which work is the *effect* of that love and favor, which God bore towards them, even when they were dead in sins: Eph. ii. 5. and although all God's regenerate people, have not a clear sense of their personal interest in God's love and favor; yet it is evident from God's word, that they are interested therein, or else they would not have been *regenerated* by God the spirit; since he regenerates none but those who are,

The *objects* of the Father's love, and

The *subjects* of redemption by Christ.

We may observe moreover,

3. That this God, who is in *Heaven*, reveals also his *covenant* to those who fear him: therefore we are not only told, that the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, but we are told also, that *he will shew them his COVENANT*: that is, he will shew them,

The *necessity* of it,

The *nature* of it,

The *stability* of it, and

Their *interest* in it,

both for their souls *comfort*, and for his own glory.

But another thing which God reveals to his people, (and which is a secret to them under their *first* awakenings) is,

4. A *sense* of their *pardon* and *acceptance* in Christ; at which time, they can say with the Apostle, we have redemption through Christ's blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Col. i. 14. They can say moreover with the psalmist, bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquity, who healeth all thy diseases. Psal. ciii. 2, 3.—And as the Lord will reveal these secrets for his people's comfort in *this world*; so also

5. He will reveal to them the *secrets* of that which is to come. Therefore, christian, what thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter to thine eternal comfort; for (verily) there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets.

SERMON LXXXV.

Psalm xxxvii. 25.

I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken; nor his seed begging bread.

THIS psalm seems to have been written by David, upon the same occasion with the former, and describes the different states of good and bad men.—It is full of exhortations, instructions, and advice to the people of God; and intermixed with many glorious promises for their encouragement and support.—We are informed in verse 23d, that *the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord*, both with respect to *temporal*, as well as *spiritual* things; and *he delighteth in his ways*, which he guides and directs him in.—And, *though he fall*, that is, into temptation, and by it into sin, *he shall not*

not be utterly cast down, because he is in the arms of everlasting love, and in the hands of Christ; therefore it is added, *for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand, and keeps him from utterly, finally, and totally falling*: for says David—I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken; nor his seed begging bread.

In these words are contained three things,

- I. The Person *speaking*,
- II. The Persons *spoken of*, and
- III. The *Testimony* given concerning them.

First, as to the Person *speaking* is David, who we may observe, was,

1. *A good man*, for he is called a man after God's own heart, 1 Sam. xiii. 14, and it is said of him in the first Book of Kings, that his heart was *perfect* with the Lord his God, 1 Kings xi. 4. which I think, sufficiently evinces the truth of the above assertion, namely, that this David was a *good man*. And as he was a good man, so also he was

2. *A wise man*; as appears evidently from his own words, where he says, hear this all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: both low and high, rich and poor together. My mouth shall speak of *wisdom*, and the meditation of my heart, shall be of *understanding*: Psal. xlix. 1, 2, 3. from which passage it plainly appears, that David was a *wise and understanding man*; not only in a *literal*, but also in a *spiritual* point of view, he being made *wise unto salvation*, which is what he spoke of, or declared to those who feared the Lord. Psal. lxxvi. 16.—But we may observe also, that David was

3. *An old man*, this appears obviously from my text now under consideration, wherein it is said, I have been young and *now am old*; and consequently
what

what David has asserted is the result of long *experience* and *observation*: for as his own experience testified that God had never forsaken him; so also he had observed the same testimony confirmed, in the experience of others. Now as David was

A good man,
A wise man,
An old man, and
A man of experience;

we may safely rely upon the truth of the testimony which is given by him.—But let us proceed now,

II. To the Persons *spoken of*, which my text tells us, are the *righteous*—not all those who *think themselves righteous*; nor yet all those who are *thought so by men*; but by the righteous mentioned in my text, we are to understand all those who are made righteous *before God*, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them; Rom. iv. 6. in consequence of which, they, in *regeneration* are made righteous *internally*; and in their *conversion*, or turning from sin to God, they appear righteous *externally*, for the grace of God teaches them to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Thus
ii. 12.

Having given you this short description of the persons spoken of, I shall proceed,

III. To the *Testimony* given, concerning the same; and here let it be observed; that the psalmist does not say, he never saw the righteous *afflicted*; for on the contrary he tells us, that *many* are the afflictions of the righteous. Psal. xxxiv. 19.—Nor does he say, that he never saw them *persecuted*, for he himself, when praying to his God says, deliver me from my *persecutors*, for they are *stronger than I*.

Psal. cxlii. 6.—Nor does he say, he never saw the righteous tempted; for that is the common lot of all God's regenerate people. Accordingly the Apostle tells the Corinthians, there hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to men. *1 Cor. x. 13.*—But David's testimony is,

That he never saw the righteous forsaken,—
Nor his seed begging bread.

First then, good-old David testifies, that he never saw the righteous forsaken; that is, *totally and finally.*—The righteous may sometimes think, and even say so, as obviously appears in the Prophecy of Isaiah, where we are told, that *Zion* said, the Lord hath forsaken me; and my Lord hath forgotten me; *Isai. xlix. 14.* and even David himself at one time, was brought to reason thus;—will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? but we find David in the following verse, making an apology for his conduct, saying, *this is mine infirmity.* *Psal. lxxvii. 7, 8, 9, 10.*

And as the *righteous* sometimes think, and say that God hath forsaken them, so also do the *wicked*: therefore says David, *mine enemies speak against me—saying, God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him.* *Psal. lxi. 10, 11.* But, says David in my text, I never saw the righteous forsaken, or finally given up of God, for says he, though many are the afflictions of the righteous, the Lord delivereth him out of them all: *Psal. xxxiv. 19.* which perfectly agrees with his own promise, where he hath said, I will never leave, nor forsake thee. *Heb. xiii. 5.*—But,

Secondly,

Secondly, another part of David's *testimony* is, that he never saw the *seed* of the righteous *begging bread*; that is, allowing that they also are righteous:—Which must be supposed, because good men have sometimes wicked children, who by their bad conduct are reduced to penury and want; and brought to beg their bread from door to door.—And we may observe here also, that in some particular circumstances, even the righteous themselves have been under the necessity of begging bread: as did

David of Abimelech, 1 Sam. xxi. 3. and

Elijah of the widow, 1 Kings xvii. 11.

and yet neither of these were forsaken of God with regard to his *gracious* operations: and although *David*, as well as *Elijah*, did *beg bread*, yet it was only on particular occasions, and when in particular circumstances; for in a general way, God provides for his people all things necessary, both for *life* and *godliness*. But again, this part of my text may be read as follows—yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his (righteous) seed though *begging bread* forsaken, or totally given up of God. And one of the Jewish writers interprets the passage thus; although his seed, and his sons are *begging bread*: yet I have not seen the righteous man *their father* forsaken, because of his fear of the blessed God.

S E R M O N LXXXVI.

Galatians iv. 6.

And, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

THIS chapter begins with a *simile*, which is that of an heir while under age, being under tutors

and governors, until the time fixed by the parent's will.—Then follows an accommodation of the above *simile*, by which the Jews under the former dispensation, are represented as *children* in a state of *bondage* to the ceremonial law; from which there is deliverance by Christ, at the appointed time of the father; by whom he was sent for that purpose; for when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; And says the Apostle, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

In these words, two things present themselves for our consideration, namely;

- I. A *Cause*, and
- II. An *Effect*.

First, then let us attend to the *Cause*, which is expressed in these words; *because ye are sons*—now, be it remembered brethren, that there is a *twofold* sense, in which God's people may be called *sons*, that is to say,

By adoption, and

By birth:

in the former of these, the relation is *constituted*; and in the latter, the likeness of *nature* and *disposition* of sons are produced: the former is an *act* of God *towards* his people, and the latter is a *work* of grace *within* them: therefore though it is by *adoption* that the relationship is *made*, yet it is by *regeneration*, that it becomes *manifested*.

But we must observe here, that it is not our relationship by *birth* that we have to attend to under this head; but our relationship by *adoption*.

Now,

Now, *adoption*, is a taking those into the relation of children, and treating them as such, who are not so by nature or birth: for *it is an act that must pass upon a stranger, and not upon one's own by birth.* This truth is exemplified in the case and conduct of Pharaoh's daughter towards Moses, for she said to the nurse, take this child away and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.—And we are informed, the child grew: and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and *he became her son*, that is by *adoption*: Exod. ii. 9, 10. and this passage is an illustration of the *act* of adoption; as well as of the *subject* on whom it passes.

But we may observe here, that the *act* of adoption entitles the *adopted* to certain *privileges* which are common to the rest of the family, such as, *education, food, clothing, protection*, and at length an *inheritance*.—And thus it is in the *act* of *divine adoption*; the *adopted* become entitled thereby to all the privileges and blessings of their father's house; for says the Apostle, if a son, then an heir of God through Christ: (verse 7th) and again, if *children* (that is by adoption) then heirs, (Rom. viii. 17.) heirs to the blessings of grace *here*, and to glory *hereafter*:—for there is provision made in the covenant of grace, for the *education* of these adopted ones, therefore we are told, they shall be all taught of God.—Their *food* is the sincere milk of the word, and Christ the bread of life;—their *clothing* is the best robe, the righteousness of Christ;—for their *protection* they have God, who is a wall of fire round about them;—and the *inheritance* of which they are heirs (in consequence of their sonship) is among the *Saints in light*.

And here we may observe, that this *act* of adoption is a *voluntary act*, on the part of the *adoptioner*, and is done without the *knowledge* and *consent* of the

the adopted, as is evident by the case of Pharaoh's daughter, in her adopting Moses.: *Exod. ii. 9, 10.* and thus it is also, when this act is applied to God, for it is with him, or on his part, an act of free and sovereign grace, which passes upon all his people; without either their *knowledge*, or their *consent*.

But some perhaps are not so much at a loss with respect to adoption itself, as they are with regard to the *time*, when that act takes place with God; because some affirm, that it is an *eternal act*, and others say, that it does not take place, before the people of God are brought to believe in Christ with the heart unto righteousness.—But that the act of adoption must pass upon all God's people, *before they believe*, is obvious for the following reasons: for—

First, were it not so, the Apostle must have expressed himself very wrongly in my text now under consideration, for instead of his saying, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts; he should have said, because God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, that makes you his *adopted sons*, which would have been putting the *cause* for the *effect*, and the *effect* for the *cause*, as do many in this our day. But be it remembered brethren, that faith does not make us the *adopted* sons of God, but only makes us appear to be so, agreeable to what the Apostle says, we are all the children of God (that is, manifestively) by faith in Christ Jesus. *Gal. iii. 26.*—But,

Secondly, the idea of adoption upon believing, destroys the very nature of the *thing itself*; for this act must pass upon a *stranger*, and not upon one's own by birth. *Exod. ii. 9, 10.* Now, no man can believe till he is born of God, and no one that is born of God is a proper subject of adoption;

because then he is not a *stranger*, but God's by birth. And it is equally as improper to talk of God's adopting his regenerate people into his family; as it would be for a man to talk of adopting his own natural son. In short, all that faith does in this matter, is to *receive the adoption*, Gal. iv. 5. which it could not do, if it did not exist before faith was given.—But,

We may observe again, that this act of *adoption* took place with God, not only before *believing*, or the work of the spirit in the hearts of God's people, but even before the work of Christ was wrought in time for them, and it was for his people in the relation of *children by adoption*, that he gave his life a ransom for them. Therefore we are informed, that he died not only for his people among the Jews; but that also he should gather together in one, the *children of God* that were scattered abroad. John xi. 51, 52. from which words we may observe, that though the people alluded to in this text were in a *scattered*, or *unregenerated* state; yet they are called the *children of God*, which must refer to their relationship by *adoption*, in which sense they were the children of God before he died for them.

In short, the act of *adoption* of which I am now speaking, is with God an *eternal act*, which took place in divine predestination; (Eph. i. 5.) it runs parallel with election, and is like that, an act of grace towards his people; and not a work of grace within them. They were given to Christ in this relation in the covenant of grace; for says Christ behold I and the *children* which God hath given me: Heb. ii. 13. from which passage it evidently appears, that they were *children* (that is by adoption) when they were given to Christ to be redeemed by him; for which purpose, as the *children*

as partakers of *flesh* and *blood*, he also himself likewise took part of the same : Heb. ii. 14. and though the nature which he assumed was common to all mankind, yet it was with a particular view to the *children* (by adoption) that he assumed it.

Both having attended to the cause, let us proceed now

II. To the *Effect*. — For says my text, because ye are sons, — the effect is — God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Now under this head we may observe,

1. That by the *spirit of his Son*, the *third person* of the ever blessed Trinity is intended, — and

2. He who sent him we are told, is God, that is God the Father :

3. We are informed also, *where* he was sent : namely, into the *hearts* of these Galatians, in consequence of which, they became quickened and renewed in the spirit of their mind. — This spirit in them became their leader, and they thereby were manifested to be the sons of God : for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the *sons of God*. Rom. viii. 14. He becomes moreover a *testifyer*, and gives evidence to the truth of their *relationship* ; for the *spirit itself* beareth witness with *our spirit*, that we are the *children* of God : Rom. viii. 16. — and in my text we are told, that this same spirit *crieth*, or enables the soul to cry, *Abba, Father* ; the latter of which words is an explanation of the former, and whereas the word *crieth* reads the same backwards as it does forwards, it may intimate to us, that God is a father to all his people in Christ, from *eternity*, to *eternity*.

S E R M O N LXXXVII.

Canticles vi. 2.

My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

THE discourse between the Church and the daughters of Jerusalem is, in this chapter continued, and the occasion of the words of my text being introduced, was, in consequence of two questions proposed to the Church by the daughters of Jerusalem, in the first verse of this chapter, in which they ask; whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? to which questions, the Church answers in the words of my text, saying, my beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. Now, however these words might be applicable to Solomon in a literal sense; yet, inasmuch as this song is expressive of the mutual love which subsists between Christ and his people; we shall find them applicable in a spiritual point of view, I think, to many of God's regenerate people.

In speaking on these words, I shall take notice,

- I. Of the Church's Claim,
- II. Of Christ's Situation—and
- III. Of his Employment.

First then, I am to take notice of the Church's Claim; it is contained in these two words,

beloved. Now this word *MY*, though small in itself, is a word of the greatest importance, and affords the greatest comfort to God's regenerate people, when they can use it *experimentally*, as does the Church in the text now under consideration.

For it implies,

1. *Union to Christ*: not only of their persons, as being chosen in him before the foundation of the world, as it is expressed by the Apostle in Eph. i. 4, but also a union of their affections to him; in consequence of the love of God being shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them. Rom. v. 5.

And as the word *MY* in this text implies union to Christ, so also it implies,

2. *Interest in him*: of which their regeneration is a manifest proof; for none are regenerated by God the Spirit, but such as have an *interest* in Jesus Christ. But then it should be observed here, that regeneration gives no man an *interest* in Christ, but it is that work, in which his interest in Christ is made to appear. And as this word *MY* implies an union to, and an interest in Christ:

So also it implies,

3. *An assurance thereof*: and here we may observe, that faith as to its exercise, differs very much in the same persons at different times. This is exemplified in the experience of David, who sometimes in the strongest manner, expresses his faith of interest in God, and in his favor; and at other times, was much disquieted in his soul, and ready to think that God had forsaken him. See Psal. lxxvi. 26. and xxii. 1. And we may observe the same truth verified also in the case and conduct of Peter: who at one time strongly expressed his faith in Christ as the Son of God; and at another time,

(being intimidated) he denied him with oaths and curses. See Matt. xvi. 16. and xxvi. 74.

But we may observe again, that in some, faith rises to a full assurance, as is expressed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Apostle says, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith: Heb. x. 22. and when the Christian is enabled so to do; then it is, that he makes the claim contained in my text, saying, MY BELOVED, which is similar language to what is used by Thomas of old, when he said, MY LORD and MY GOD. John xx. 28. Job also expresses himself after the same manner, where he says, I know that my Redeemer liveth: Job xix. 25. As does also, the Apostle Paul, where he says, when speaking of Christ (He) loved me, and gave himself for me. Gal. ii. 20. Now though the full assurance of faith is not necessary to make a man a Christian: (since faith may be, where that assurance is not.) Yet, this full assurance of faith is necessary, in order to make a man a comfortable Christian.

But having taken notice of the Church's claim, let us proceed to take notice,

II. Of Christ's Situation—which we are informed is, in his garden, among the beds of spices. Now by this garden we may understand the Church of God; because that like a garden is,

1. Taken out of waste ground, for there is not, nor never will be a Church, but what comes out of the waste and howling wilderness of this world: therefore it is said of the Lord's people, that he found (them) in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness. Deut. xxxii. 10.

But the Church of God may be compared to a garden also,

2. Because like that, it is inclosed: for salvation

hath God appointed, for *walls* and bulwarks. *Isai.* xxvi. 1. And it is said also, that a garden *inclosed* is my sister, my spouse. *Song* iv. 12. It is inclosed by the Lord himself; for I, saith the Lord, will be unto her, a wall of fire round about. *Zech.* ii. 5. See *Isai* v. 1, 2.—Again,

3. The Church of God, like a garden, must be *digged* and *planted*: therefore thus saith the Lord, to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. *Jer.* iv. 3. And the Apostle, when speaking of forming the different Churches says; I *have planted*: *1 Cor.* iii. 6. and Christ tells us, that every plant which his Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. *Matt.* xv. 13.—We may observe again,

4. That every garden wants to be *watered* and *kept*, and so does the Church of God; therefore it is said, I the Lord do keep it; I will *water* it every moment, and lest any hurt it, (that is in future seasons) I *will* keep it night and day. *Isai.* lviii. 3.—But we may observe also,

5. That a garden requires the *benign influences* of the *sun*, in order to promote the *growth* of the different plants, and so likewise does the Church of God; for which purpose it is said, unto you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall: *Mal.* iv. 2. for all shall *grow* in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *2 Pet.* iii. 18.

6. Gardens require moreover the *different seasons* of the year: for the nipping frosts are as necessary for the destruction of the *insects*, and for the growth of the plants, as the warming influences of the sun are: and so it is with the Church of God,
for

for there are many hypocrites frequently hanging about it, who cannot suffer much in the cause of religion, and therefore, when the nipping frosts of persecution lay hold of them, they drop off, and their profession dies. Matt. xiii. 21.

Now, this garden is called in my text *his*, (that is Christ's) garden, which it may well be, because we are told, that he *purchased* his Church, with his own blood. Acts xx. 28. But as it is said in my text, my beloved is gone down into his garden; it also it is said, that he is gone to the *beds of spices*; to which particular believers planted in the Churches of Christ may be compared,

For the *fragrancy* of their graces, and

For their *regularity* and *order*,

which is, or ought however to be found among them.

But this leads me to take notice,

III. Of Christ's *Employment*, which is expressed in these words,

To *feed* in the gardens, and

To *gather lilies*.

First then, one part of Christ's employment when in his gardens among the beds of spices, is to *feed*; that is to say, to feed his *flock* there: for which purpose it is, that he visits the particular Churches, at particular seasons; the members of which Churches he feeds.

With *himself*, the bread of life, or

With the *discoveries* of his *love*,

made to their souls by the blessed spirit of God, whose office it is thus to glorify Christ.—But,

Secondly, another part of Christ's employment in his garden is, to *gather lilies*; to which the *Saints* may be compared. Accordingly it is said, he *feedeth* among the *lilies*; (Song ii. 16.) that is among

the Saints : now with respect to the lily, we may observe that

It is *white*,
It is *sest*, and
Hangs down its head :

all of which ideas, are applicable to the Saints of God : who are clothed with *white linen*, which is the righteousness of the Saints, Rev. xix. 8.—they become *sest* in their *tempers* and *dispositions* through the sanctifying influences of the Spirit—by which influences also, they are made humble : and as the *higher* the lily grows, the more it *droops* or *hangs down its head* : so it is with the Saints of God, for the *higher* they advance in the *divine life*, the more they droop and discover their *humility*.—And, Christ may be said to *gather these lilies*, when he cuts them down by death, and transplants them from the *Church militant*, to the *Church triumphant*, to enjoy everlasting *fellowship* with him, and with the spirits of just men made perfect.

SERMON LXXXVIII.

1 Peter ii. 25.

For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your SOULS.

THIS chapter contains various exhortations, to holiness of life and conversation. The Apostle herein exhorteth christians to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul; he exhorts them to be obedient to magistrates, teaches servants to be obedient to their masters, and to suffer patiently for well-doing, after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ; who, when he was reviled, reviled not
again,

again, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, for (says the Apostle) ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls.

In speaking on these words, I shall take notice,

- I. Of *what* these People *once were*, and
- II. Of the *Change* produced in them.

First then, I am to take notice of what these People *once were*; my text tells us, that *they were as sheep going astray*.—Now we may observe here,

1. That the persons addressed, or spoken to in this text, were God's *beloved* and *chosen* people, as evidently appears by the *first* and *second* verses of this Epistle, from which we may learn, that *Peter* dedicated and directed it to those, whom he calls *ELECT*, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, who chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they might be holy and without blame before him in (or through) love. Eph. i. 4. And here let me remind you brethren, that although by God's choosing his people in Christ, they are prevented from going to *hell* for their sins; yet they are not prevented thereby from going *astray* from him by their sins; for says the Apostle, *ye were as sheep going astray*.

But we may observe,

2. What these people are compared to, namely, to *sheep*, which is a character given to all those who are the objects of God's love; and in that character it was, that they were given to Christ to be redeemed by him; accordingly we are told, that he laid down his life for his *sheep*. John x. 15. From which passage it evidently appears, that these people were Christ's sheep, even before he redeemed them, and if they were his sheep before

he redeemed them, they must be so before regeneration, for in fact, regeneration does not make men the sheep of Christ, but is what makes them appear to be so.—But then we must observe,

3. That while God's people are in a state of nature, they are compared to sheep *going astray*. Accordingly the Prophet Isaiah says, all we like sheep have gone *astray*. *Isai. liii. 6.* That is to say,

From God,

From his law,

From his ordinances, and

From his people :

And thus we imitate that creature in this *bad quality*, as we do also, in that we have (*naturally*) no disposition to return; till Christ, the shepherd seeks for us, and brings us back: Oh! what a mercy it is then, that Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost; (*Luke xix. 10.*) and, that he says, I will both search my sheep, and seek them out, as a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places, where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. *Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12.* From hence it appears that all God's people, while in a state of nature, are *as sheep going astray*.

But let us proceed to take notice,

II. Of the *Change* produced in these people, it is expressed in these words, *but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls*, that is to Christ.—And here we may observe,

1. That they were returned: which was not effected by their own *natural freewill* and power, but by God's free and sovereign grace; for says the Apostle, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant

mercy,

mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. 1 Pet. i. 3. Therefore they are called new-born babes in the 2d verse of the following chapter; and the Apostle Paul says, we are his (that is God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Eph. ii. 10. Now be it remembered brethren, that in this work, men are altogether *passive*, having no more hand in their *new creation*, than they had in their *first creation*; for the Apostle does not say, we are our *own workmanship*, but that we are *God's workmanship*.

Now in this new creation work (which is no other than the work of regeneration, God turns to the sinner, communicates divine life to his soul, and gives him a disposition to go to Christ for SALVATION; so that in regeneration God turns to the sinner; and in conversion (which is the effect thereof) the sinner turns to God, from whom he had gone astray; and such is the *fallen, helpless* state and condition of man by nature; that Christ tells us, no man can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him. John vi. 44.

But let us take notice,

2. Of the *offices*, which Christ sustains in this text; and *first* he is called a *shepherd*, and this same Apostle calls him also the *chief shepherd*; 1 Pet. v. 4. because he is the shepherd of all the under shepherds, (or ministers) whom he places over his flock. — Accordingly we are told, he (that is Christ) shall feed his flock like a shepherd: (Isa. xl. 11.) and David says, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Psal. xxiii. 1.

But as he feeds his flock like a shepherd, so also like a shepherd, he watches over them; for he who is the keeper of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. Psal. cxxi. 4. and it is said, the eyes of the Lord

are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers, 1 Pet. iii. 12. and as like a shepherd he feeds and watches over his flock, so also like a shepherd he attends to their *diseases*. Accordingly David says, he forgiveth all mine iniquities, he *healeth* all my *diseases*. Psal. ciii. 3. And the Prophet Isaiah says, that by his stripes we are healed. *Iai.* liii. 5.—But,

Secondly, Christ is spoken of in my text, as a *bishop* or *overseer* of the *souls* of his people, though not to the exclusion of their bodies. Now, it is the office of a *bishop* to *instruct* those who are under him; to *inspect* their conduct, and to govern and direct them according to the mind and will of God: and these are all applicable in the strictest sense to our Lord Jesus Christ, in the *office* of a *bishop*, who kindly instructs his people, narrowly inspects their conduct, and directs them according to the mind and will of God.

SERMON LXXXIX.

Song ii. 15.

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.

In this chapter, Christ and his Church alternately set forth the excellencies of each other, and express their mutual affection for, and delight they are in each others company. In the 14th verse, Christ requests that the Church would come out of her solitude, that he might enjoy her company, whose voice is sweet, and countenance comely to him.—He then gives a charge to her, and her commands; to seize on every thing hurtful and pre-
L 1
judicial

judicial to each other ; saying, in the words of the text : take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines : for our vines have tender grapes :

In speaking on these words, I shall endeavour to shew,

- I. What we are to understand by these *Foxes*.
- II. Take notice of the *Charge* that Christ gives, and
- III. Of the *Reason* assigned for it.

First then, I am to shew what we are to understand by these *Foxes*. Now, by the term *foxes*, we may understand *false prophets or teachers* ; agreeable to which, the Lord says, O Israel, thy *Prophets* are like the *foxes* in the desert. Ezek. xiii. 4.

Now false teachers may be compared to foxes,

1. On account of the *craft* and *deceit* which those creatures are possessed of, and with which they act. Agreeable to which idea, the Apostle Paul, when writing to the Ephesians, says, that one reason why God gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, &c. was, that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the *slight* of men, and *sunning craftiness*, whereby they lie in wait to *deceive* : Eph. iv. 14. and the same Apostle says when alluding to the same characters ; (we) have renounced the hidden things of *dissonance*, nor walking in *craftiness*, nor handling the word of God *deceitfully*, (2 Cor. iv. 2.) as false teachers do.—But,

2. Foxes are *voracious* creatures, and so also are *false teachers*. Accordingly the Prophet says, when speaking of such, yea, they are *greedy dogs* which can never have enough ; they all look to their own

way, every one for his *gain* from his quarter. *Isa.* li. 11.—And we may observe moreover,

3. That foxes are very *filthy* creatures, on which account, *false teachers* may be compared to them; for they being in a state of nature, their hearts were never justified by the spirit of God, and consequently all their thoughts, words, and actions are *filthy*, for a corrupt tree (says our Lord) cannot bring forth good fruit. *Matth.* vii. 18.

But again, we may observe,

4. That foxes make *barren* those vineyards which they frequent: and so it is with *false teachers*, who are comparable to them. The *vineyards* or churches into which they creep, are generally——*Barren in their souls*, and
Barren in their *lives*:

The cause of which is, they are fed with *hush* instead of the bread of life; or in other words, they are fed with *errors* instead of the *truths* of the gospel of Christ.

But again, some there are, who understand by these *foxes*, the *corruptions of the heart*; because these

Like foxes have their *lurking holes*,

Like foxes they are *filthy*,

Like foxes they are *deseitful*, and

Like foxes they make *barren*.

But my text speaks not only of the *foxes*, but also of the *little foxes*; which may design *errors* or *heresies* in their bud, or first appearance; before they have gained strength, or ascendancy in the minds of the hearers.—But I shall proceed now,

II. To take notice of the *Charge* that Christ gives, which is, to have them taken, for says he, *Take ye the foxes, the little foxes.* Mark brethren, our Lord does not say, let the foxes or false teachers be taken to propagate their errors as they like, rather than

than appear unfriendly to them; but he says, take them, hunt, or chase them for us; and whoever does this, it is for

The *benefit* of the Church, and
The *glory* of God;

and therefore it is said, take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vine.

Now these foxes may be said to be taken, when their errors are exposed in the public congregations, and they are reprov'd for propagating them, to the dishonor of God, and the distress of immortal souls; and unless this be done *faithfully* by God's ministers, I do not see how they can discharge their duty to God, or manifest their love to their fellow-men. And as the *little* foxes are to be taken, they ought to be diligent in opposing even the smallest error, and endeavour to nip it in its bud, in order to prevent, if possible, its doing mischief to the Church, or people of God.—And,

Were we to take into our view the idea of the *corruptions* of the heart being compared to *foxes*; they also ought to be hunted, chased and taken by God's ministers; which they may be said to be—

When their *being* is pointed out,
And their *tendency* made known.

But my text tells us moreover, that these *foxes* *spoil the vine*. Now, by the *vine*, the Church of God is intended, which in scriptures goes by that name. Accordingly we find the Psalmist praying, return, we beseech thee, O God of Hosts; look down from Heaven, and behold, and visit this vine. Psal. lxxx. 14. And, though these foxes cannot spoil the vine, or the Church of God, so as to destroy its existence,—yet they spoil the *growth* of it, they spoil the *order* of it—and they spoil the *look* of it,—by introducing their errors, and causing divisions among the members thereof.

I come now,

III. To take notice of the *Reason* assigned for it.—It is contained in these words; *for our vines have tender grapes.*

Now by these *vines*, the different Churches which are scattered up and down upon the earth, are intended, which, though many in number, (Gal. i. 2.) yet when collectively taken, they are considered as *one vine*. And, by the *tender grapes* which are mentioned in this text, *young converts* are intended, for whom Christ has a peculiar regard, as appears by the words of the Prophet, where he says, (when speaking of the same class of people, though under a different character) he, that is Christ, shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom. *Isai. xl. 11.*

Now these *young converts* having but a small degree of knowledge, are the more easily imposed upon by *false teachers*, and their *false doctrines* more readily embraced by them; on which account, those who are the friends of Christ and of his Church, should,—*Carefully watch them,*

And *vigorously oppose them*; in doing which, they will discharge their duty towards God, manifest their love to their brethren—attend to the direction of Christ—and follow the example of his Apostles, and although

Careless professors, and

Opposers of the truth,

may blame and reproach you for your conduct; yet God will crown your labours with abundance of success.

SERMON XC.

Deuteronomy xxxiii. 3.

Yea, he loved the people, all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words.

THIS chapter sets forth the *majesty* of God, and relates the *blessings* pronounced by *Moses*, upon the people of Israel; and ~~however~~ the words of my text may relate to, and be true of *Israel literally*; we are sure they are eminently true of all the *spiritual Israel* of God—Who are,

- I. *Beloved by God, the Father,*
- II. *Sanctified by his Spirit,*
- III. *Preserved by Christ, and*
- IV. *Brought to his feet for instruction.*

First then, we may observe that all God's people are *beloved by him*; for it is said, *yea, he loved the people*. Now, the love wherewith God loves his people, is

1. A *sovereign love*. Agreeable to which it is said, the Lord did not set his love upon you, nor chuse you, because ye were more in number than any people;—but because the Lord loved you; Deut. vii. 7, 8. intimating no doubt, that his love to *Israel literally* so speaking was *sovereign*; and that he loved them because he would love them, and no other reason can be assigned why God loves his *spiritual Israel*, but because *he would love them*. But this love wherewith God loves his people, is—

2. A *free love*. Accordingly God says for the encouragement of Israel's return to him; I will heal their

their backslidings, and *love them freely*: Hosea xiv. 4. and this also is applicable to all the *spiritual* Israel of God; for he did not fix his love upon his people because they were, or would be better than others, but he freely loved them, without any cause in them whatsoever, to induce him so to do.

But, the love wherewith God loves his people, is—

3. *An everlasting love*. Accordingly the Prophet Jeremiah tells us, the Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an *everlasting love*; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee: Jer. xxxi. 3. And what God said at this time concerning Jeremiah, is true also of all his own people.—And,

This love, of which I am now speaking, is

4. *An unchangeable love*; therefore it is said to Zion, the Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy, he will *rest in his love*. Zeph. iii. 17. And God himself says; I am the Lord, *I change not*, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Mal. iii. 6. O! what a mercy it is, that we have a God to depend upon, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. James i. 17.

But let us pass on to observe, that these people, in consequence of God's love to them, become—

II. *Sanctified* by his spirit, for it is said, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I *drawn* (regenerated or sanctified) thee. Jer. xxxi. 3. Now, in this work of regeneration it is, that the *objects* of God's love, became the *subjects* of his grace, and are thereby made *Saints* of; for remember brethren, that no man is *born* a Saint, but *made one* in effectual calling. Agreeable to which idea the

Apostle

Apostle Paul dedicate his Epistle when writing to the Romans; to all that be at Rome,

Beloved of God,

Called to be Saints: Rom. i. 7.

From which words it evidently appears, that men are called of God, and made Saints in their calling, in consequence of God's love towards them: so that God does not *sanctify* his people, and then *begin* to love them, but he loves them first; and then *sanctifies* them in consequence thereof; in which work of *sanctification* it is, that he makes them fit

For communion with himself here, and

For the enjoyment of himself hereafter.

For says the Apostle, (He) hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. Col. i. 12.

But we may observe moreover, that as the objects of the Father's love are sanctified by the spirit, so also they are:

III. *Preserved by Christ*; for says my text, all his Saints are in thy hand, that is in the hand of Christ, and therefore every Saint of God must be secure in time, and to all eternity. Agreeable to which idea, Christ says, when speaking of his sheep, they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand; John x. 28. for they are,

His people, Matt. i. 21.

His portion;

His inheritance, Deut. xxxii. 9.

His charge, John xvii. 10. and

Under his protection: John xvii. 12.

and that is the reason that none of them can be lost, or perish eternally. Hence we may observe that this part of our text is a clear vindication of
— That soul-strengthening — That God honoring
and — That Christ-exalting doctrines of the first

possession of the Saints, for whose encouragement Christ says, because I live, you shall live also. John xiv. 19. In which words are contained,

A cause, and

An effect;

the cause is expressed in the words, I LIVE; and the effect is expressed by the words, you shall live also.

But as these Saints are in Christ's hand to be preserved by him, so also—

IV. They are brought to his feet: where (we are informed) they *sat down*, in allusion to scholars sitting at the feet of their masters: agreeable to which idea, we are told, that Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Acts xxii. 3.—But,

It may point out moreover, the *modesty* and *humility* of the Saints; who being convinced of their own *ignorance*, are brought by the power of divine grace to the feet of Christ, that is,

They wait on him in his house,

And attend at his ordinances;

for all that instruction which they feel the want of, and which he hath promised to give; knowing that it is said, *all thy children shall be taught of the Lord*, *Isai. liv. 13.* of whom it may be asked with the strictest propriety, who teacheth like him? *Job xxvi. 22.* that is,

Who teacheth so *wisely*,

Who teacheth so *freely*,

Who teacheth so *fully*, and

Who teacheth so *effectually*,

as the Lord Jesus Christ teaches *all his Disciples*.—Therefore it is said in my text, that *every one shall receive of thy words*; accordingly says Christ, when speaking of his Disciples, I have given unto them the words (or doctrines) which thou gavest me: and

and they have received them, John xviii. 8. that is,

They have understood them,

They have believed them,

They have loved them, and

Have acted according to them;

and this, in every age of the world, will be the conduct of all those, who are *loved* by the Father, *sanctified* by the spirit, and who are brought thereby to the *feet* of Jesus, where

They will sit *willingly*,

And *constantly*,

in order to be instructed in those things, of which they may find themselves ignorant.

S E R M O N XCI.

Romans viii. 2.

For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

AS the former chapter shews, that God's regenerate people are not free from the *being* of sin, nor yet from the *acts* thereof, which are a ground of uneasiness and complaint to them: so this chapter shews, that *justified ones*, are secure from the *charge*, as well as from the *punishment* of sin, and have the greatest reason to rejoice and be glad; for *there is therefore now*, (seeing things are as before stated) *no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*—From which words it evidently appears, that what secures God's people from *condemnation before him*, is not any thing wrought in them, nor done by them, but their *being in Christ only*; and when the Apostle lays down a rule by which these *justified ones* may be known to their

their fellow-christians; he does it in the following words, saying, *they walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.*—He then introduces the words of my text and says, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

In discoursing on which words, I shall take notice

- I. Of Paul's *Character*,
- II. Shew what this Law *is*, and
- III. What this Law *did* for him.

First then, let us attend to Paul's *Character*, and we shall find that he was—

1. *A gracious man*: for in the beginning of this Epistle to the Romans he says, when speaking of Christ, that by (him) *we have received grace and apostleship*: (Rom. i. 5.) which words not only prove that he and the rest of the Apostles were *gracious men*; but also, that they received their *grace*, as well as their *office*, from the Lord Jesus Christ; in whom, is deposited all that his people stand in need of in time, and for a joyful eternity.

Therefore we may observe again, that this Paul was

2. *A justified man*; and a man who enjoyed *peace with God*, in a way of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. This appears obvious from his own words, where he says, therefore being justified by faith, *we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*. Rom. v. 1. From which words we may learn, that Paul was a *justified man*, that is to say,

Before God in Christ's righteousness,

And in his own conscience by faith:

In consequence of which, he enjoyed peace with God; which, with his every other mercy, flowed through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But it appears also, that Paul was,

3. *A loving man*, for he tells us that hope maketh
not

not ashamed ; because the *love of God is shed abroad in our hearts*, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Rom. v. 5. By whose influences it was, that he was brought

To love God,
To love his people,
To love his word, and
To love his ordinances,

which love was manifested in his *outward deportment*, by a life and conversation agreeable to what he professed and preached.

And the Apostle was a man, who was well acquainted also with—

4. The *workings of the human heart*, as every real Christian is. This must appear obvious, I think, to every one who reads the seventh chapter of this Epistle to the Romans, wherein he not only relates his own experience *after* he was called by grace ; but also the experience of every *regenerate man*, in every age of the world ; who at seasons is brought to groan under a body of sin and death as Paul did. Rom. vii. 24.

But having taken notice of Paul's character, I proceed,

II. To shew what this *Law* is, which the Apostle calls in my text, *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*.—Under which head we may observe,

1. That by the term *LAW*, we are not to understand the *ceremonial law*, that being at this time abolished by Christ ; for says the Apostle, he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having *abolished* in his flesh the enmity, even the *law of commandments* contained in ordinances ; for to make in himself of twain one new man, making peace. Eph. ii. 15.—And,

2. As by the term *law*, in my text, we are not to understand the *ceremonial law*; so neither are we to understand thereby the *moral law*: which Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil. Matt. v. 17. For the *moral law*, which is contained in the *twentieth chapter* of the book of Exodus, never did, nor never will make any transgressor thereof free from *sin* and *death*.—But,

3. By the term *law* in this text, we are to understand *doctrine*. This I presume is the meaning of the term in Isaiah's prophecy, where it is said of Christ; he shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and *the isles shall wait for his law*: (Isai. xlii. 4.) that is, for his *doctrine*; so that by the *law* of the spirit of life, the *doctrine* of the spirit of life is intended.

But we may observe here,

4. That the Holy Ghost is called in my text, *the spirit of life*: which he may well be, because

He has life in himself,

Gives *spiritual* life to others, and

Makes meet thereby for *eternal* life:

For it is the spirit who quickeneth the souls of his people, whereby he makes them fit for communion with himself here, and for the enjoyment of himself hereafter. This spirit of life in Christ, reveals the doctrine of life and salvation by Christ, both——In his *word*, and

To the *hearts* of his people;

which terminates in their comfort, and in God's glory.—But this leads me to shew,

III. What this Law DID for Paul; which was, that it made him free from the law of *sin* and *death*. Now by this law, the moral law is undoubtedly intended, which is called——

The law of *sin* and *death*.

M m

First,

First, this law is called the *law of sin*; not because it is sinful in itself, for Paul tells us, that it is *holy, just and good*, Rom. vii. 12.—nor can it be called the *law of sin*, because it excites to sin, for nothing of that nature can be laid to the charge of this *holy, just and good* law:—but it may be called the law of sin, because it *forbids* it in thought, word and deed; and because it makes it *known* to the conscience of the awakened sinner; therefore says the Apostle, *by the law is the knowledge of sin*; Rom. iii. 20. for says he, I had not known sin but by the law. Rom. vii. 7. For these reasons therefore, this *law* may be called the *law of sin*.

But *secondly*, this law is called also the *law of death*—but then be it remembered brethren, that the *moral law* so called, is not the law of death to the innocent, but to the *guilty*; or to those, who are the *transgressors* thereof, whom it *condemns to eternal death*: for it is written, *curst is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*. Gal. iii. 10.—Now,

From this *law of sin and death*, the Apostle, (as well as the believing Romans to whom he wrote) was *delivered, or made free*, and that by the law (or doctrine) of the spirit of life in (or by) Christ Jesus; that is, he was made free from the *curse* of this law of sin and death; for says the Apostle, Christ hath *redeemed us from the curse of the law*, being made a curse for us. Gal. iii. 13.

But then, neither *Paul*, nor any other *believer*, is delivered from the *observance* of this law, as is clear from our Lord's own words to his *Disciples*, to whom he says, the Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses's seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: so that although God's people are freed from the *curse* of the law, they are not freed from the *observance* thereof.

SERMON

S E R M O N XCII.

Isaiah xlv. 20.

He feedeth on ashes : a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand ?

IN the former part of this chapter, the Lord comforts his people with the promise of the *effusion* of his Spirit, and the blessings of his grace upon them; the consequence of which would be *fruitfulness* in them, and the *conversion* of others, who would be brought to profess themselves to be the Lord's people.—He then proves his *deity* in opposition to all *false Gods*, and exposes the *stupidity* of the idol worshipper, saying, in the words of my text, he feedeth on ashes : a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his own soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand.

In speaking on which words, I shall take notice,

I. Of the *Character* alluded to, and

II. Of what is *said* of him.

First then, I am to take notice of the *Character* alluded to, by the word *He*,—by which word, there can be no doubt, of the idolater being primarily intended. But then, the charge brought against him, will be found equally applicable I presume to every other man in a state of nature, as well as to the idolater literally so called; since they also are prone to depend upon that for deliverance, which will afford them no assistance; and to rely upon those things for happiness, which will afford them no

solid peace and satisfaction of mind. Now by a *natural man* is intended, one

Who is *dead in sin*,
 Whose *understanding* is dark,
 Whose *will* is perverse, and
 Whose *affections* are wrong placed,
 Having no (well grounded) *hope*, and
 Without *God* in the world,
 He is sensual, having not the spirit,
 And alienated from God by wicked works;
 He *does* what God *forbids*, and
 Leaves undone what he *enjoins*;

for his carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.—He is *earthly* in his nature,

Sensual in his *appetites*, and
Devilish in his *conduct*.

But having given you a description of the *Character* alluded to; I shall proceed to take notice,

II. Of what is *said* of *him*,—and

1. We are told, that *he feedeth on ashes*, that is, the idolater, who fills and feeds himself, with hopes and expectations of being helped and delivered by his idol; which conduct is as vain and delusive, as it is for a man to feed on *ashes* instead of bread, for the support of his body; for he is feeding on that, which can afford him no kind of nourishment, but on the contrary, is pernicious and hurtful to him. And thus it is with all natural men, who are seeking for happiness in

The *wisdom* of the world,
 The *honors* of the world,
 The *pleasures* of the world, and in
 The *profits* of the world:

And of every such character it may be said, as in the words of my text; *he feedeth on ashes*, for were

he to obtain all his heart could wish for, of the *wisdom, honors, pleasures, and profits* of this world, they would not afford him one moment's solid peace and satisfaction to his soul, either in his living or in his dying moments; for as to the wisdom of this world, that is foolishness with God — And what will it avail us, being *honored of men*; while we are unacquainted with that *honor*, which cometh from God only? — she that liveth in pleasure (we are told) is dead while she liveth; — and what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

But we may observe again, that all those who feed on *false doctrines*, or doctrines which are contrary to God's word, may be said also to feed on *ashes*; which instead of doing them good, will in the end be found to do them hurt: for instead of strengthening and comforting their souls, they will be found to weaken and distress them.

And as these may be said to feed on *ashes*, so also may all those who are seeking for salvation from their own works, instead of what Christ hath done and suffered; or, that are seeking for *peace of conscience* from their *duties*, instead of expecting it in a way of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Apostle expresses it. Rom. xv. 13,

But it is said moreover,

2. That a *deceived heart* hath turned him (the idolater) aside, that is, from the one true God to his idol. And a *deceived heart* is what every man is possessed of, and it is that by which he is turned aside

From the *worship* of God,

From the *way* of salvation,

From the *way* of peace, and

Into the *way* of sin and rebellion against God, for the heart is *deceitful* above all things and desperately wicked; Jer. xvii. 9. and every imagination

M. m. 3.

of

of the thoughts thereof, is only evil continually. Gen. vi. 5. Now the heart of man being a *deceived heart*, it is no wonder, that it *deceives* him who trusts to it; a consideration of this nature no doubt made the wise man say, he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool. Prov. xxviii. 26.

But my text tells us also,

3. That he (the idolater) *cannot deliver his soul*, that is, from his idols and idolatrous practices. Now this part of our passage, clearly points out to us man's *utter inability* to help himself, and proves the truth of our Lord's words, *without me ye can do nothing*. John xv. 5. And if Christ's own *Disciples* could do nothing without him, notwithstanding they had experienced the quickening power of God upon their souls; we are sure that those who are dead in trespasses and sins, cannot do any thing towards delivering their own souls, any more than the *idolater* alluded to in my text: for no man can deliver his own soul, either

From the *band* of justice,
From the *dominion* of sin,
From the *service* of Satan,
From evil *principles*, or
From evil *practices*,

for this is God's work, and he only can accomplish it.

But then as the above-mentioned character cannot deliver his soul, so neither can he be brought to say

4. *Is there not a lie in my right hand?* that is, the idolater cannot be persuaded that the idol which is *in*, or *at* his right hand, *is* a lie, or a deceitful thing, a thing not fit to be worshipped, trusted in, or depended on;—and thus it is also with *all natural men*, who in fact are idolaters:—for notwithstanding they are seeking for *happiness* from the *world* and the *things* of the world;—notwithstanding they are seeking

seeking for *salvation* by their *own works*; and for *peace of conscience* from their *own doings*;—and notwithstanding they are feeding upon the ashes of false doctrines, which are sure to hurt them, instead of doing them good; yet so infatuated are they, and so influenced by a *deceived* and a *deceitful* heart, that they cannot be prevailed on (by men) to acknowledge that these are *lies*, which they hold in their tight hands.

SERMON XXIII.

Song v. 16.

—*This is my friend.*—

THIS chapter out of which my text is taken, begins with Christ's answer to the Church's request; in which he informs her, that he was come into his garden according to her desire, and gives an account of what he had done there, and kindly invites his *friends* to feast with him.—She then relates her case and circumstances which follow upon this; and afterwards mentions the treatment which she met with from the watchmen; her charge to the daughters of *Jerusalem*, and the questions they asked about her beloved, which questions put her upon giving a very large description of him; after which she openly claims him as her own, saying, *this is my beloved, this is my friend.*

In speaking on these words, I shall point out to you,

- I. The *Necessity* of this friend,
 - II. Some of his *Properties*, and
 - III. Who they are that can *claim* him as such.
- First,*

First, I am to point out to you the necessity of this friend—this undoubtedly will appear, if we reflect a few moments on the sad state and condition, in which all mankind are involved by sin. For,

1. They are represented to have fallen among *thieves*; to which *sin* and *Satan* may well be compared, since they robbed man of the *image* of God, and of that *happiness* which he originally enjoyed; for it is added, that these thieves *stripped him of his raiment*; by which *raiment*, we are undoubtedly to understand his *original righteousness*, which was formerly his covering; and in which he could appear before God. From hence it appears, that man by nature is a *naked creature*.—But,

We are told also, that these *thieves wounded* man; which clearly sets forth the diseased condition into which sin has brought him, and it may be said of him, that from the crown of the head, to the sole of the foot, he is full of wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores; and such as are of themselves mortal, and incurable by any, but the great physician of souls. And it is added moreover, that these thieves left mankind *half dead*, or *near death*; for no sooner did man sin, but his body became mortal, or he began to die; for the wages of sin is death. Rom. vi. 23. But as the body and the soul are but one man; we may understand by the words *half dead*, that natural men, though alive in their bodies, have their souls dead in trespasses and sins; Eph. ii. 1. they are dead to God, and to every thing that is good. From these considerations then it appears, that men want a friend. See Luke x. 30.

But we may observe again, that the necessity of this friend will appear also,

2. If we consider that men are involved in

and have nothing to discharge it with, this matter is clearly represented to us, by our Lord's address to Simon, to whom he said, there was a certain creditor which had two debtors, the one owed him *five hundred pence*, and the other *fifty*: and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Luke vii. 41, 42. Now by the *creditor* in this text, *God* is doubtless intended.—By the *two debtors*, are meant greater and lesser *sinners* so called; for all *sins* are debts, and all *sinners* are debtors.—But notwithstanding men are debtors, they have nothing by which they can discharge their debts, this being their case and condition, the necessity of this friend evidently appears.

But mankind by nature, are represented moreover to be

3. In a *starving* and *perishing* condition:—accordingly it is reported of the *prodigal*, that when he came to himself, he said, how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare: and I perish with hunger! Luke xv. 17. And in this perishing state and condition, are all men by nature, which clearly points out the *necessity* there is of this friend (namely, Jesus Christ), who is spoken of in my text, and if any ask wherein his friendship appears; I answer,

In the *covenant of grace*,

In becoming a *surety*,

In *paying* the *debts* of his people,

In working out a righteousness, and

In interceding for them.

But I shall proceed to point out as proposed,

II. Some of the *Properties* of this friend: under which head we may observe that he is,

1. A *rich friend*: for it pleased the father that in him should all fulness dwell, (Col. i. 19.) that
is.

is for his people, there is in him a *fullness of grace* to regenerate their hearts, and to supply their wants here; and there is in him also a *fullness of glory* reserved for them hereafter.

But as he is a *rich*, so also he is,

2. *A faithful friend*; that is, he is faithful to his Father, having perfectly fulfilled his covenant engagements with him, in fulfilling the law, and suffering the penalties thereof.—And he is faithful also to his people, and as he hath said they shall never perish; (John x. 28.) each of them shall persevere in grace while here; and be brought to glory hereafter; for it is *impossible* for God to lie. Heb. vi. 18.—But

3. Christ is a *tender-hearted friend*, and sympathizes with his people in all their trials and difficulties: for says the Apostle, we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: Heb. iv. 15. and the Prophet says, he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye. Zech. ii. 8. Therefore it was, that he said to Saul when persecuting his people; Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Acts ix. 4.

And we may observe again, that Christ is,

4. *An unchangeable friend*: for we are informed that he is the same yesterday, to day and for ever Heb. xiii. 8. and he is that friend who loveth at all times, Prov. xvii. 17. a friend, that sticketh closer than a brother. Prov. xviii. 24.

But having shewn you that Christ is

A *rich* friend,

A *faithful* friend,

A *tender-hearted* friend, and

An *unchangeable* friend;

I shall pass on, and point out to you,

III. Who they are that can *claim* him as such,—
and here let me observe,

1. That no one who is in a *state of nature* can make this claim; for Christ is neither beloved by such, nor are they acquainted with that *friendship* which resides in his breast towards all those, whom he hath redeemed with his most precious blood: and as they are unacquainted with his friendship, they cannot claim him as their friend.

But we may observe again,

2. That it is not the privilege of all those, who are called by grace, to claim Christ as *their friend*; since many may be convinced of their sinfulness, both by nature and practice; as they may also, of their utter inability to help themselves; and yet not be enabled to claim Christ as their friend, as does the Church in the words of my text.—But,

3. Those who can claim Christ as *their friend*, are such as are possessed of what the Apostle calls the *full assurance* of faith, Heb. x. 22. for though every regenerate person hath faith, yet, every regenerate person has not the full assurance thereof, nor even the same person, (perhaps) at different times; but when faith does rise to a *full assurance*, then it is that the possessors thereof can say with the Apostle, he loved ME, and gave himself for ME; Gal. ii. 20. WE know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens: 2 Cor. v. i. such also can say, in the language of holy Job, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; Job xix. 25. or as in the words of my text, *this is MY friend*.

SERMON

S E R M O N XCIV.

Matthew xxiii. 37.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered THY CHILDREN together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and YE would not!*

THIS text is frequently made use of by some, in order to disprove the doctrines of *election*, *particular redemption*, and the *irresistible power of God* in the work of *conversion*; and in favour of *sufficient grace* to all men, and of the *freewill* and power of man, in turning to God at any time: but whether either of the *three former* can be *disproved*, or the *two latter* be *established* from the passage, the following pages shall testify. And for the sake of order, I shall endeavour to shew you,

- I. What the Passage *does not* mean, and
- II. What it *does* mean.

First then, I am to endeavour to shew you, what this Passage *does not* mean. And in doing which it will be necessary for me to shew you,

1. What this *gathering* is, which is mentioned in it, and in which Christ is thought to be *disappointed* in his *will* and *intentions*: because there are many who tell us, that the *gathering* here spoken of, is a *gathering of souls to Christ*, by the *spirit* and *grace of God*, for *life* and *salvation*; but that this cannot be the meaning of the text, is obvious, I think, to every attentive reader of God's word. For if we consider Christ as God, it may then be asked

asked, who hath resisted his will? Rom. ix. 19. If Christ will to gather all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, or even all the inhabitants of the earth to himself, in a saving way; who hath, or where is the being that can so resist, as to make void his sovereign will in that, or in any other matter whatsoever. If he will therefore to work on the hearts of any of the sinful sons of Adam, for saving purposes; none can stay his hand, as is obvious from his own declaration, where he says, I will work, and who shall let it? Isai. xliii. 13. Here, God evidently gives a challenge to any being, either in Heaven, Earth, or Hell, to come forward and hinder if he can, the work which he hath put his hand unto. And,

I often think brethren, that the Prophet Daniel had a very proper view both of God and man, when he introduced the following words: all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed (that is, by the Lord) as nothing, and shall this nothing frustrate the will of God? no, for says Daniel, he doeth according to his will, in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the Earth. Dan. iv. 35. Were he therefore to will, savingly to convert all the inhabitants of the earth, they would be so converted; for says Daniel, he doeth according to his will among them. Accordingly we find, he willed to convert a persecuting Saul, and Saul therefore was converted:—he willed also to convert Mary Magdalene, and Mary Magdalene was converted:—he willed likewise to convert the Thief upon the cross, the Thief therefore was converted; not by his own natural freewill and power, (for says Christ, no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him) but by the will and power of God.

From these considerations it appears then, that

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the *gathering* spoken of in my text, does not intend Christ's willingness to gather all the inhabitants of Jerusalem in a *saving* manner to himself; for had he willed that, that also would have been accomplished, as the conversion of *Saul*, *Mary Magdalene*, and the *Thief* upon the cross was.

But I shall proceed now as proposed, to shew--

II. What the Passage *does* mean; in doing which, we have to observe,

1. That Christ in this verse, speaks as a *man* and *minister*, and expresses an *human affection*, for the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and a *human wish*, or *will* for their *temporal good*; therefore it is said, that when he came near, he beheld the city, and wept over it. Luke xix. 41.—And,

2. We should observe also, that by the term *Jerusalem*, not all the inhabitants thereof are intended, but the *rulers* and *governors* of it, both *civil* and *ecclesiastical*, which *governors*, were the people whom our Lord was at this time addressing, and are manifestly distinguished from those whom he calls *their children*.

Now you have to observe brethren, that it was usual to call those who were the *governors*, *heads* of the people *fathers*; and those who were *subjects*, or *disciples*, *children*. Accordingly we find that when Paul was addressing the *governors* upon a certain occasion, he says unto them, men, brethren, and *fathers*, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you. Acts xxii. 1. And our Lord when addressing such, and speaking of their destruction, says, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy *children* within thee. Luke xix. 44.

Now be it remembered, that our Lord was speaking to the *children*, or common people;

was he blaming them for not being gathered by him, but he was speaking to their rulers, or governors, saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children, &c.

Now the gathering spoken of, is undoubtedly a gathering of them *externally*, by and under the ministry of the word to hear him preach, whereby they might have been brought to acknowledge him as the *Messiah*; and although a bare assent to him as the Messiah, would not have saved their souls; yet, it would have been sufficient to have preserved them from temporal ruin, which preservation is signified, by the hen gathering her chickens under her wings.

But says our Lord,—ye would not,—that is, ye rulers and governors would not suffer your children (the common people) to be thus gathered.—They seemed indeed to be inclined to attend Christ's ministry, as appears by the crowds which followed him, at different times and places; but the chief priests and rulers did all they could to prevent their hearing him, believing on him, and professing him to be the *Messiah*, and decreed, that if any man did confess that (Jesus) was the Christ, he should be cast out of their Synagogue. John ix. 22.

From what has been said then it evidently appears, I think, that there is nothing in this text, which militates against either the Doctrines of election, particular redemption, or the irresistible power of God in the work of conversion: nor is there a single idea to be gathered from it, in favor of sufficient grace to all men, or to support the natural freewill and power of man, in turning to God at any time.

SERMON XCV.

Ezekiel xliii. 22.

Because with lies, ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hand of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way by promising him life.

IN these words, there are two ideas present themselves to our view for consideration; which are,

- I. The Characters spoken to, and
- II. The Charge brought against them.

First then, let us attend to the characters spoken to—and we shall find that they are the *false prophets*, who are described in the preceding part of the chapter;

1. As *foolish prophets*: therefore it is said in verse the *third*, wo unto the *foolish prophets*, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing—now all *Prophets* or preachers may be said to be *foolish*; who are not furnished with wisdom from God; for such follow their own spirits, and what but folly can be expected from them?—But,

2. In the *fourth verse* of this chapter, these *false Prophets* are compared to *foxes*: for it is there said O Israel, thy *prophets* are like the *foxes* in the *deserts*. Now false teachers may be compared to foxes for the *craftiness* in which they walk, Eph. iv. 14. and the *deceitfulness* with which they handle the word of God: 2. Cor. iv. 2: and they may be compared to foxes in the *desert* also, because of their *ravenous* nature and disposition; and it may be said

of them, as the Lord says of all the workers of iniquity; *they eat up my people as they eat bread.* Plal. xiv. 4.—But,

3. The *false prophets, or teachers*, are further described in the *sixth verse* of this chapter, as *not being sent of God*. Accordingly it is said, they have seen *vanity*, and *lying divination*, saying, the Lord saith, and *the Lord hath not sent them*.—that is, they came to the people with a *lie* in their mouths, giving out that the Lord spoke by them, when in fact they had no mission from him, nor any commission to say what they did to them, for had they been sent by the *God of truth*, they would have spoken the truths of God.

And these *false prophets, or teachers*, are described moreover, as a people,

4. *Whom the Lord is against*:—Accordingly it is said in the *eighth verse*, because ye have spoken *vanity* and seen *lies*, therefore, behold I am *against* you, saith the Lord God: that is, I will be an *adversary* to you, and *oppose* you in the propagation of your falsehoods.—And, O! what an *awful* thing it is for a man to have God against him? for there is no contending with him, and none ever hardened himself against God and prospered; for men are with him but as *bubble*, or as *thorns* and *briers* to a consuming fire: and in short, what God said concerning the *false prophets* in *Jeremiah's* time, is applicable to every *false teacher* now, namely, *I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all.* Jer. xxiii. 32.

But having taken notice of the *characters* spoken to, I proceed,

II. To the *Charge* brought against them: which divides itself into two parts, the *first* of which is,

N. n. 3.

With

With *yes* ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad.

Now in this part of the charge we may observe,

1. That the Lord speaks of the *righteous*; not of those who are born so, for in that sense there is *none* righteous, no not one: Rom. iii. 10. But of those who are made so (before God) by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them; Rom. iv. 6. and who in consequence thereof, have been called effectually by his grace; which teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly and righteously, and Godly in this present world. Titus ii. 12.—But,

2. It is said of these people, God hath not made them *sad*; nor does he wish them to be so, as appears from the words of the Prophet Isaiah, where he says; *comfort ye, comfort ye my people*, saith your God, *speake ye comfortably to Jerusalem*, and cry unto her, that her *warfare* is accomplished, that her *iniquity* is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. Isai. xl. 1, 2. But we are told also,

3. By what means it was, that these *false Prophets* or teachers made the righteous sad; it was by *their lies*, or false doctrines, which are sure to have that effect upon the minds of God's people, whenever they are believed by them, as many in this our day can testify; to whom it is sometimes represented by *false teachers*, that God is *changeable in his love*, which we are sure is a *lie*, because we are told by the Prophet *Zephaniah*, that he will *rejoice in his love*, Zeph. iii. 17. and by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, that he loves his people with an *everlasting love*. Jer. xxxi. 3.—But,

Sometimes these *false teachers* represent also, that the *justification* of God's people is by *works*; which we know also to be a *lie*; because the Apostle Paul

tell us, that by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in (God's) sight; Rom. iii. 20. and in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, he says, not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. ii. 9.

At other times these *false teachers* will represent to their hearers, that the *Saints* of God may *finally fall into Hell*, notwithstanding what Christ hath done for them, and the spirit hath wrought in them; but that this likewise is a *lie*, is obvious from Christ's own words, where he says, when speaking of his sheep, they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand: John x. 28. as it is also, from the words of the Apostle Paul, where he says; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. i. 6.

And at other times these *false teachers* will strongly insist upon man's *natural freewill* and power, by which they can turn to God at any time, but that this is a *lie*, is evident; not only from *experience*, but likewise from the *word of God*; wherein it is said that God worketh in (his people) both *to will* and *to do*, of his good pleasure. Phil. ii. 13. Now by these and such like *lies*, the hearts of the *righteous* are frequently made *sed*.

But, *Secondly*, another part of the charge which is brought against these *false prophets*, or teachers is; that they *strengthened the hands of the wicked*, that he should not *return* from his wicked way, by promising him life. And what can have a greater tendency to strengthen the hands of wicked men, and to prevent their turning from sin to God, (humanly speaking) than the *false doctrines* of *universal redemption*, and of man's natural power of turning to God at any time, for says the *natural man*, if Christ have redeemed *all men* universally, then

then *all men* universally must go to Heaven, or otherwise God will be found unjust. And if man have a *freewill* and *natural power* to turn to God at any time; then says the natural man, I will go on in sin now, and turn to God in my *dying hour*: and thus by their *lies* they *strengthen* the hands of the *wicked*, that he should not return from his wicked way; as they do also, by promising him *eternal life* by the deeds of the law, a way by which it can never be obtained.

SERMON XCVI.

Genesis xlix. 10.

—And unto him, shall the gathering of the people be.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy, relating to the twelve sons of *Jacob*, and to the twelve tribes, as descending from them; and which he delivered to his sons on his death-bed, after calling them together for that purpose.—He begins with *Reuben* his first-born, whose *instability* he takes notice of, on which account he should not excel—in the next place we find, that *Simeon* and *Levi* have a *curse* denounced on them, for their *cruelty* to *Shechem*.—But of *Judah*, good things are prophesied, and particularly that *Shiloh* should spring from him, and unto HIM (we are told) shall the gathering of the people be.

In speaking on which words, I shall take notice,

- I. Of the *Person* alluded to, and
- II. Of those *People* that shall be gathered unto him.

First, as to the person alluded to by the word HIM as my text, he is called in the verse out of which

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It is taken, by the name of *Shiloh*, by whom, Christ is undoubtedly intended, that being one of the names of the Messiah; and well agrees with him, as it denotes him to be the only *procurer* of our *happiness*; and our only *peace-maker* with God. Agreeable to which *idea*, the Apostle says, *he is our peace*, (Eph. ii. 14.) that is, Christ is our peace-maker; he having made peace (on God's part,) through the blood of his cross, Col. i. 20. or by that blood which he shed on the cross, when he was suffering for the sins of his people.

But, as Christ is the *maker*, so also he is the *giver* of that *peace*, which his people enjoy in a way of believing in him. Therefore when he was about to depart out of this world, he addressed his Disciples, saying, *peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you*; (John xiv. 27.) this *peace* therefore is called by the Apostle, the *peace of God*, which he tells us passeth all understanding, and keeps the hearts and minds of his people, through Christ Jesus, Phil. iv. 7.

And as Christ is the *peace-maker*, and *peace-giver*, so also, he brings his people at length to *everlasting peace* and happiness. Agreeable to which, Christ told his Disciples, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John xiv. 3. Accordingly all such will be addressed at the last, when, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world: Matt. xxv. 34. in which kingdom, they will enjoy uninterrupted peace and happiness, through one eternal day.

But having taken notice of the *person alluded to*, I shall now proceed to take notice,

II. Of the *People* that shall be gathered unto him.
Under

Under which head we may observe, that *not* all the people in the world are intended, for when our Lord was addressing some of the Jews of old, he said unto them, ye *will not* come unto me that ye might have life : John v. 40. intimating no doubt, that they were seeking for life, but that they were seeking for it in a wrong way, namely, by the *works of the law*, instead of by *Jesus Christ*, which was owing to the *enmity* of their *corrupt minds*, and to the *perverseness* of their *stubborn wills*.

Therefore by the people mentioned in my text, we are to understand,

1. The people of *God's love* ; which *love*, was fixed upon the persons of his people *before time*, and which is the cause of his doing them *good in time*, as well as of the enjoyment of *that good*, which they will partake of, when time shall be no more.— But we may observe again,

2. That these people are the people of *his family* ; I mean those whom he hath adopted into his family. Accordingly we are told, that it was necessary that Christ should die, not for that nation only ; but that also he should gather together in one, (that is in one Body) the *children of God* that were scattered abroad. John xi. 52.—Therefore,

3. They are the people also of *his choice* ; those whom he hath chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world ; in order to make their salvation and happiness secure : for as *out of Christ* there can be no *salvation* : so *in Christ*, there can be no *damnation*. For God hath (says the Apostle) chosen us in (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him, in (or through) love ; Eph. i. 4. so that we could have been neither *holy*, nor without blame *before God* ; had it not been in consequence of

our personal union to our Lord Jesus Christ.—But,

4. The people that shall be gathered; are all the redeemed of the Lord. Accordingly we are told in Isaiah's prophecy, that the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing to Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away; *Isai. li. 11.* these then are the people, who shall be gathered unto *Shiloh*, that is, unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now by the gathering of these people to Christ, their conversion is doubtless intended, and therefore we may learn, that all those who are

*Beloved of God,
Adopted into his family,
Chosen in Christ,
And redeemed by him,*

shall be gathered to him, and rely upon him, for pardon, peace, righteousness, and eternal life, which life, (we are told) is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Rom. vi. 23.*

But be it remembered brethren, that inasmuch as there is nothing in the hearts of natural men, to cause them to turn to our heavenly *Shiloh*; the work of regeneration is obviously necessary, in order to bring that matter about. Therefore it is, that the spirit of God is sent into the hearts of all his people, in order

To quicken them,

To enlighten them, and

To communicate to them a divine nature,

to enable them to turn from sin, and to cleave to God, its divine author. In this work of regeneration, which is a communication of divine life and light to the soul, the sinner is wholly passive; although as the effect thereof, he becomes active in the work of conversion, or in his turning from sin,

to his heavenly *Shiloh*, the Lord *Jesus Christ*,
who is——His *peace maker*,

His *peace-giver*, and

His *peace-maintainer*;

and who will also bring him at length, into the full enjoyment of *uninterrupted peace and happiness*, in another and in a better world; into which, all shall be gathered, who are gathered to Christ in this world, in *effectual calling*; for we are told, that he will gather his *wheat* into his *garner*, but he will burn up the *chaff* with *unquenchable fire*. *Matt. iii. 12.* Thus therefore by the *person alluded to* in my text, CHRIST is intended:—and by the people to be gathered are meant, all his *beloved ones*, his *adopted ones*, his *chosen ones*, and his *redeemed ones*.

SERMON XCVII.

2 Timothy iii. 5.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

IN this chapter the Apostle delivers out a *Prophecy* of the last days, wherein he shews, how perilous the times will be, describing the persons who will live in them, and what their end will be; and in opposition to these men, he proposes himself as an *example*, both in *doctrine* and *sufferings*, and encourages *Timothy* to persevere, to whom he also highly commends the *sacred scriptures*.—The *Prophecy* begins at the first verse, and contains a description of *hypocrites*, *formal professors*, and *false teachers*, and of whom it is said in the words of my text, *having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

In these words, three ideas present themselves for our consideration: which are,

- I. *What these Men had,*
- II. *What they denied,* and
- III. *The Direction given concerning them.*

First then, let us attend to what these Men *had*;—my text tells us, they had a *form of godliness*. Now by a form of godliness, we are to understand the *external appearance* of religion, which includes,

Reading the word,
Hearing the gospel,
Attending its ordinances,
Praying to God, and
Giving alms to the poor, &c.

all of which may be attended to without the least particle of *divine life* in the soul, and consequently by those persons, who are totally destitute of the power of godliness; for although such characters read the word of God, they do not understand it; although they hear the gospel, they do not receive the blessings thereof;—although they attend its ordinances, they reap no benefit therein; although they pray to God, it is neither with the *spirit* nor with the *understanding*, nor yet from a *feeling sense* of their wants;—and notwithstanding they may give alms to the poor, it is done neither

From a right principle,
In a right manner, nor
To a right end:

being destitute of the *spirit* of God, they are destitute also of the *grace* of God; and all works done without the *grace* of God, have the *nature* of *works* in them. Therefore no natural man as such, ought to boast of his *good works*, since he never does any which deserve that appellation, in a spiritual point

point of view, for *the plowing of the wicked is sin*: Prov. xxi. 4. and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually; (Gen. vi. 5.) and our Lord also tells us, that a *corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit*. Matt. vii. 18.

But having shewn what these men had, I shall proceed to shew,

II. *What they denied*:—which my text tells us, is the *power of godliness*, this consists of the *life of God* in the soul, and an *experimental* enjoyment of the blessings of the gospel of Christ.

With respect to the *life of God*, that is communicated in the work of *regeneration*, at which time those become *quickened*, who were formerly dead in trespasses and in sins, Eph. ii. 1. Their understandings become enlightened, and they are brought to an *experimental* knowledge

Of their lost,

Of their guilty, and

Of their helpless state; and

Of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ;

they experience a deliverance from the *charge of sin*, that being imputed to Christ their surety: *Isai. liii. 6.*—They experience also a deliverance from the *punishment of sin*, Christ having borne that in his own body on the tree; for he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: *Isai. liii. 5.* they experience moreover a deliverance from

The *guilt of sin* in the *conscience*,

The *love of it* in the *heart*, and

The *dominion of it* in the *life*,

for inasmuch as they are made partakers of the *grace of God*, that teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly and righteously, and godly in this present world; *Tit.*

ii. 12. And thus they shew forth the praises of him, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. 1 Pet. ii. 9. They read the word of God, and understand it,—they hear the gospel and embrace it,—they attend its ordinances with profit. They pray to God with the spirit and with the understanding also, 1 Cor. xiv. 15. and what they do with respect to giving alms, they do it not to be seen of men, but to glorify God: *for the love of Christ constraineth them*; 2 Cor. v. 14. because they are

*Pardoned through his blood,
Justified in his righteousness, and
Sanctified from his fulness.*

But my text tells us, that these hypocrites, formal professors, and false teachers denied this power of godliness; that is,

They denied it with their lips, and

They denied it with their lives.

They spoke evil of the things which they knew not; Jude 10. and although they might profess to know God, yet in works they denied him. Tit. i. 16.

But this leads me,

III. To the *Direction* given concerning them—
it is contained in these words, *from such turn away*, that is, have no fellowship with them; for the company of such may do a christian hurt, but there is no probability of its doing him any good.

This is similar advice to that which the Apostle gives to the Corinthians, where he says, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty; 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. which passage, not only contains an exhortation for God's people, to leave

the company of those whose conduct is not agreeable to the word and will of God; but it contains also, sufficient *motives* to induce them so to do.

But the christian, I presume, is not only directed to turn away from the *persons* or *company* of these men, who deny the *power* of *godliness*; but also from their *principles* and *practices*; the former having a tendency to *poison* the *mind*, and the latter to *dishonor* God, and to disgrace religion; this will evidently appear by attending to the *first* six verses of the chapter out of which my text is taken. From what has been said then we may learn, that *godliness* is divided into *two* parts, namely, the *form* and the *power*, and that the *former* may be held by those persons who *deny* the *latter*.

SERMON XCVIII.

I Peter i. v.

Who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.---

IN discoursing on this text, two particulars are necessary to be attended to, which are,

- I. The *Persons* alluded to, and
- II. Their *Privilege* set forth.

First then, let us attend to the *Persons* alluded to; and we shall find by the *second* verse of this chapter, that they are called,

1. The **ELECT**, or chosen of God; which are a people, who being beloved of God, are frequently spoken of in the word of God, accordingly our Lord

tells us, that there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; inſomuch that (if it were poſſible) they ſhall deceive the very ELECT: (Matt. xxiv. 24.) but bleſſed be God, that is *impoſſible*, for the *elect* can never be ſo deceived as to loſe their *immortal* ſouls; for at the laſt day, Chriſt ſhall ſend his *angels* with a great ſound of a trumpet, and they ſhall gather together his *elect*, from the four winds; from one end of Heaven to the other. Matt. xxiv. 31.

Theſe *elect*, or choſen people are ſpoke of alſo, in the goſpel by Saint Luke, where it is ſaid, in the application of the parable of the unjuſt Judge, ſhall not God avenge his own *elect*, which cry day and night unto him? Luke xviii. 7. In this verſe we have not only the ELECT of God ſpoke of; but we have pointed out moreover, how they may be known, namely, by their frequently crying, or praying unto God.

But the Apoſtle Paul likewiſe makes mention of theſe *elect*, or choſen people; for in his Epiſtle to the Romans, he ſays, who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's *elect*? Rom. viii. 33. and in one of his Epiſtles to Timothy, he ſays, I endure all things for the ELECT ſake. 2 Tim. ii. 10.

But we may obſerve again, that the perſons alluded to in my text, are ſaid

2. To be *begotten of God*; for ſays the Apoſtle, Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, (who) according to his *abundant mercy*, hath *begotten us again* to a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead. (verſe 3) Theſe people then, in conſequence of their being the *elect*, or choſen of God, were *begotten again*, or created anew in Chriſt Jeſus, and that by virtue of Chriſt's reſurrection from the dead, in which

work, they had *begotten* in them a *lively hope of* and a *meetness for* that inheritance, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for them. (verse 4th.)

But this leads me to attend,

II. To their *Privilege* set forth; which is,—

1. That *they are kept*.—Now this implies that God's people are exposed to *danger*, which they certainly are,

From their *darkness*,
From their *ignorance*, and
From their *weakness*:
From the *number* of their enemies,
From their *power*, and
From the *policy* of them:

But yet in the midst of all, we are told, *they are kept*; that is,

They are kept in a *state of favor with God*; nor is it in the power of all their *enemies* put together to deprive them of it: for

His *love is everlasting*, and
His *nature unchangeable*.

They are kept also, in a *state of justification before God*; the matter of which is the *righteousness of Christ*, consisting of his *active* and *passive* obedience, or of his *fulfilling* the law in his life, and suffering its *penalty* in his death; this righteousness the Father *imputes* to all his people, which righteousness justifies their *persons* before him, and keeps them in that state. But God's people are kept also in a *state of grace*, when once they are brought into that state: for the *water* that Christ gives them (at regeneration) shall be *in them*, a well of water springing up into everlasting life; John iv. 14. and it is out of *his fulness*, that they all receive, and grace for grace. John i. 16.

In this state of grace they are kept *here* for a *state of glory hereafter*; for to whomsoever God gives grace, he always gives glory, and withholds no good thing from them. Psal. lxxxix. 11.

But it is worthy also of a remark,

2. By *what power* they are kept; and here let it be remembered brethren, that the christian is not kept by the mighty power of *himself*; nor is he kept by the mighty power of *ministers*, for they also as well as himself stand in need of a keeper; but my text tells us, that *they are kept by the mighty power of God*. From hence we may see, that God is engaged for the *preservation* of all his dear children, by whose almighty power it is, that they are kept from all their enemies.

But my text says moreover,

3. That it is *through faith* they are kept, not a natural faith, but a *supernatural* one; even by that faith which is the gift of God, (Eph. ii. 8.) and which Christ is the author, as well as the finisher of. Heb. xii. 2. By this faith it is, that they are kept——Looking to Christ,

Relying upon him, and

Receiving from him

all the blessings of the everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David. By this faith it is, that they get the *victory* over the world, 1 John v. 4. as well as every other enemy, and become more than conquerors, through Jesus Christ. Rom. viii. 47.

But we may observe also,

4. *What it is, unto which* the Saints are thus kept—my text tells us, it is *unto salvation*; blessed be God for that, for if they are kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto salvation; then it is utterly impossible for any of them to be lost. And we may observe here, that *salvation* is obtained for all God's people by the *obedience and death*

death of Christ, and in the work of regeneration, this salvation is *applied* to them by God the Spirit, by whose influence it is, that they are saved from the *guilt, love, and dominion* of sin; but the *full enjoyment* of salvation which is here intended, is reserved for them in Heaven; it is described by the Apostle in the fourth verse of this chapter, as an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that *fadeth not away*, reserved in Heaven for you—

For *you elect* or chosen people,
For *you* who are *begotten* of God,
And for *you* who are *kept* by

his almighty power through faith. From this passage then we may observe, for the encouragement of the *Saints of God*, that their inheritance is kept for them; and they are kept for their inheritance, by the *mighty power of that God*, who never was, nor never will be conquered by any being whatsoever.

S E R M O N XCIX.

Isaiah xli. 10.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

AS this verse contains such a cluster of glorious promises; it will be necessary for me to shew you,

- I. To *Whom* they belong, and
- II. The *Import* thereof.

First, with respect to the *persons* to whom these promises belong, they are particularly described in the

the two verses, which precede my text; wherein they are called

1. *Israel*, by which term, not carnal, but *spiritual Israel* are intended; such who by the power of divine grace were turned from idols, from sin, and Satan, to serve the *true* and the *living* God.

Therefore it is added,

2. Thou art *my servant*; not that these people were born servants, but they were made so by the operation of God the Spirit upon their hearts; for *being made free from sin*; that is, from the *charge, punishment, guilt, and dominion* thereof; they became servants to God, agreeable to the Apostle's language in Romans vi. 22.—But,

3. These people are called moreover, by the name of *Jacob*; Israelites indeed, plain-hearted men, who under the influence of God the Spirit, are become *wrestlers* with him in prayer, and these we are told are God's *chosen* ones; *chosen* in Christ before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. and chosen out from among the men of the world, in effectual calling. John xv. 19. Not, observe, that their wrestling with God was the cause of their being chosen, either in the former, or in the latter sense; but their wrestling with God in prayer, was the effect of them born.

4. These people are called likewise, the *seed of Abraham, my friend*, that is, the spiritual seed of Abraham, true believers in Jesus Christ; for says the Apostle, they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham: Gal. iii. 7. and these spiritual children of Abraham are friends of God as Abraham also was;—they *think* friendly of God,—they *speak* friendly to God,—and act friendly towards him.

But

But again these people are spoken of—

5. As a *called* people, for they are said (in the verse before my text) to be a people whom God had taken from the ends of the earth, and *called* from among the *chief* men thereof: that is, they were called by grace, while such personages were left or passed by, for not many mighty, not many noble are called. 1 Cor. i. 26. Now these people thus called, God addresses, saying, thou art *my servant*; I have *chosen* thee, and not cast thee away; agreeable to the Apostle's words, God hath *not cast away* his people whom he foreknew. Rom. xi. 2. This therefore should encourage them to suffer persecution patiently for his name's sake, and not be afraid of any of their enemies.

But this leads me to shew,

II. The *Import* of the *promises*.—But before we enter upon them particularly, it is necessary to observe, that God reminds the above described people, that *HE is with them*,

To guard and protect them,

To support and supply them, and

To comfort and strengthen them;

and this he reminds them of, in order to silence their *fears*, when surrounded by their various enemies: therefore he says, when thou passest through the *waters*, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee. Isa. xlii. 2.

And we may observe also, that God reminds these people of their *relationship* to him, for it is he, I am *THY* GOD: that is, thy *covenant-maker* and *covenant-keeping* God, as appeared by the *effectual calling*. This he mentions in order to support their minds under their various discouragements.

ments with which they meet, therefore says he, *be not dismayed.*

But let us take a glance now, at the promises contained in this text; which are thus expressed,

I will strengthen thee,

I will help thee, yea,

I will uphold thee.

These, brethren, are precious promises indeed; and well adapted to the christian's case.

But let us meditate on them *separately,*

First then, God here promises to *strengthen* his people; which promise is well calculated to support their minds, under a feeling sense of their own *weakness*; and under which, they frequently cry to God in the language of David, saying, have mercy upon me O Lord, for *I am weak.* Psal. vi. 2. Now the Lord we are told giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might, he increaseth *strength.* Isai. xl. 29. Remember then, you that are feelingly sensible of your own weakness: that God hath positively said, *I will strengthen thee.*—But we may observe,

Secondly, that he promises likewise to *help* his people; which promise is well calculated also to support their minds, under a sense of their own *inability* to help themselves out of the difficulties and dangers, in which they are sometimes involved. Accordingly David, when surrounded by his enemies, and under a sense of his own *helplessness*, prays unto God saying, *make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.* Psal. xxxviii. 22. Therefore remember you that are sensible of your own *helplessness*, that God hath said for your encouragement,—*I will help thee.* But we may observe again, that the christian from a feeling sense of his *weakness* and *helplessness*, feels also that he is
liable

liable to fall, and therefore for the encouragement of such, God says,

Thirdly, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness; which promise is doubtless expressive of his love to his people, and his protection of them; so that they shall stand in the grace of God—go on in his ways—and persevere to the end—notwithstanding their trials and temptations may be *great* and *many*; for which purposes God tells them, *I will strengthen thee—yea, I will help thee—yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* Now as these promises belong to all God's called ones, may that God give them the comfort thereof.

SERMON C.

Song ii. 3.

I sat down under his shadow with great delight; and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

THIS chapter is begun by Christ, who gives an account of himself, and his own excellencies; and of the Church in her present state; saying, *I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys; as the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters*—then the Church in her turn, praises Christ, and commends him above all others, saying, *as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons: she then expresses her satisfaction which she found in him, saying, in the words of my text, I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

In speaking on these words, I shall,

- I. Take notice of this *Shadow*,
- II. Shew what is implied by *sitting under it*, and
- III. Point out what this *Fruit* is, which the Church found sweet to her taste.

First, I am to take notice of this *Shadow*, by which *Christ* is undoubtedly intended, who is just before compared to an *apple-tree*, both for fruitfulness and beauty; and also on account of the cooling, comforting, and refreshing nature of the fruit which that tree bears. Accordingly it is said of *Christ*, thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat; when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. *Isai. xxv. 4.* The same Prophet tells us also, in another place, that man shall be as an *hiding place* from the wind, and a *covert* from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. *Isai. xxxii. 2.*

Now, be it remembered brethren, that *Christ* is a shadow to his people,

1. By his person; he being God as well as man, and therefore he is a proper mediator between God and man; *1 Tim. ii. 5.* for he is one, who is equally engaged for the honor of his Father, as he is for the salvation of his people, who are given to him.

2. *Christ* is a shadow also by his blood; which he shed for his people on Mount Calvary, by which he screens them from the curses of a broken law, he being made a curse for them: *Gal. iii. 13.* and delivers them from that wrath which they have deserved, on account of their sins. *1 Thes. i. 10.*

3. *Christ* is a shadow likewise, by his righteousness.

rest, which he hath wrought out, and the Father imputes to his people ; by which righteousness it is, that he shades, or screens them from *all condemnation* whatsoever, for says the Apostle, there is *no condemnation* to them, who are in Christ Jesus. Rom. viii. 1.—But,

4. Christ is a *shadow* moreover, by his *wisdom, love, power, and faithfulness* ; from the *fiery darts of Satan*, and from the *persecutions* of the men of the world. Accordingly we are told, that no weapon that is formed against his people shall prosper, (Isai. lv. 17.) for the Lord is as a *shield* round about them.

But having thus taken notice of the *Shadow* ;—I come now

II. To shew, what is implied by *sitting under it*. Under which head we may observe, that it implies

1. That the Church saw the *necessity* of such a *shadow* ; and so does every *awakened sinner*, who sees and feels the guilt and burden of sin, and his utter inability to deliver himself from the *punishment* which is due to him, on the account thereof.

It implies also,

2. That she saw the *suitableness* of this *shadow* ; and so does the *awakened sinner*, who sees the insufficiency of his own righteousness for his justification before God ; and the all-sufficiency of Christ's righteousness for that purpose ; which righteousness is very *suitable*, for one who sees and feels his own *unrighteousness* ; because it answers the requirement of God's law, as well as satisfies his infinite justice.

It implies moreover,

3. That the Church saw the *safety* of Christ's *shadow*, which made her the more willing to lie down under it : and thus it is with every *awakened sinner*, who is brought to discover that Christ—his person—by his blood—and by his righte-

ness is a SHADOW that screens from *sin*, *Satan*, and *death* to come ; he discovers him to be a *safe* shadow, and therefore he willingly sits down and rests under it : here it is that he sits with *delight*, yea, says my text, *with great delight* ; such a character greatly delights—

In the *person* of Christ,
In the *work* of Christ, and
In *communion* with him.

But this leads me as proposed,

III. To point out what this *Fruit* is, which the Church found sweet to her taste.

Now, by *this fruit*, the *blessings of grace* are intended ; which blessings are deposited in Christ, and flow from him. As—

1. From his *life*, there is produced a *perfect* and *complete righteousness*, every way adequate to the requirements of *God's law*, and is a part of that *fruit* which the Church found sweet to her taste ; as does also every child of God, when he discovers his *personal interest* in Christ's righteousness ; this fruit of Christ's life then becomes sweet to his taste.—But,

2. From *Christ's death* are produced also a *paradise* and *peace* ; for we are told, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, 1 John i. 7. and that he hath *made peace* through the blood of his cross ; Col. i. 20. these then are the fruits of his *death*, which also become sweet to the *believer's taste*, when he discovers his interest in what Christ hath done and suffered for him.—We may observe,

3. That *sanctification* also is a *fruit*, which is produced from Christ's fulness ; for of his *fulness*, have all we received, and grace for grace : John i. 16. and the Apostle tells us, that Christ is made

of God unto us, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*; 1 Cor. i. 30. so that *sanctification* evidently appears to be a *fruit*, which is produced from Christ's fulness, and may therefore be called *his fruit*.

And as *sanctification* is a *fruit* from his fulness, so also,

3. Is *glorification* a fruit of his *intercession*. Accordingly we find Christ saying, *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am*; John xvii. 24. which passage though it alludes to the *Apostles* in particular, yet it is applicable to *all Christ's people*, for whom he ever lives to make *intercession*. Heb. vii. 25. Now, in these *fruits*, those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, find peculiar *sweetness*; they are pleasant and refreshing to their immortal souls; and therefore they can *experimentally* say, *his fruit is sweet to our taste*.

S E R M O N C I.

Acts xxvii. 44.

And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship: and so it came to pass, that they escaped safe to land.

NOW, by considering this *voyage* of the *Apostle* and the *Saints* with him, as an *emblem* of the passage of God's people through this world to *Heaven*; there will present themselves *two things* for our consideration, which are—

- I. Their *Difficulties* and *Dangers*, and
- II. The *Certainty* of their *Arrival*.

First then, let us attend to the *Difficulties* and *Dan*

get, with which the people of God meet, while they are passing through this world to Heaven.— This part of my subject may be illustrated by attending to the *difficulties* and *dangers* which Paul and his fellow-christians met with, on their voyage to Rome; for,

1. We have reason to believe, that the *number* of christians who were in the ship with the Apostle was very *small*, when compared with the number of men that the ship contained, which we are informed was two hundred, threescore, and sixteen souls. (verse 37.) And so also the *number* of the children of God, in any one period of time, is but *small* when compared with the rest of the world. Accordingly our Lord, when addressing his Disciples, says, fear not *little flock*, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke xii. 32.

2. The Apostle and his companions had but very indifferent *company*, which consisted of *other prisoners*, a *band of soldiers*, and the *sailors* which belonged to the ship: and thus it is with the Church of Christ, while passing through this world; for they are as a *lily* among *thorns*, Cant. ii. 2. and like righteous *Lot* of old, are frequently vexed with the *filthy conversation* of the wicked; 2 Peter ii. 7. with whom to the grief of their souls, they are sometimes obliged to keep company. But we may observe,

3. That Paul and the rest of his fellow-christians, met with *contrary winds* while on their passage, as appears by the *fourth* verse of this chapter out of which my text is taken: and thus it is sometimes with the christian, while on his passage through this world, for he meets with many things to oppose him, and which also may be compared to *contrary winds*,
P p 3

winds, because they have a tendency to stop, or drive him back, while on his passage through this world to another.

4. We are informed also, in the *ninth* verse of this chapter, that the *sailing* of Paul and his companions was at this time *dangerous*: and thus it is with the *Saints* while sailing through this world, for they are in danger through the abounding of iniquity, as they are also, from the *errors and heresies*, which are spreading around them.

Again, it is said likewise,

5. That the Apostle and the rest of his companions met with a great *storm* on their voyage, (see verses 14th and 18th) and this also applies to the christian, who meets with many storms on his voyage to Heaven; and it is well for him, that Christ is an hiding place from the *wind*, and a covert from the *tempest*; (Isai. xxxii. 2.) and that he is built on such a *foundation*, that the most violent storms cannot move or destroy.

But we may observe moreover,

6. That while on their passage they lost sight of both *sun* and *stars* for many days, as appears from the *twentieth* verse of this chapter; which not only added to their *danger*, but also made their voyage the more *uncomfortable* to them; and thus it is sometimes with God's dear children, while on the passage through this world to Heaven. Christ is the *sun* of righteousness is not seen by them, for many days following each other, on account of the clouds which interpose between him and them.—The same moreover, or the *ministers* of the gospel are removed from them, so that their eyes cannot behold their teachers; which situation not only makes their voyage through this world the more *dangerous*; but also the more *uncomfortable* to them.

We are informed also, in the above mentioned verse,

7. That so great was this storm, that all *hope of salvation was gone*.—And such at times is the case of real christians, their strength fails them, and all hope of being saved is given up by them, on account of the various difficulties and dangers through which they are called to pass. They are ready to say with David of old, I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me. Psal. lxxix. 2.

But,

8. In the midst of their dangers and distress, we are informed that Paul stood forth and said, I exhort you to be of good cheer, for *there shall be no loss of any man's life among you*. (verse 22d) And thus also, says the Redeemer, concerning his Church and people, they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. John x. 28. For though the christian's enemies come against him as a storm against the wall; yet the Lord will be their strength, their refuge, and their shadow from the blast of the terrible ones. Isai. xxv. 4.—And,

9. Notwithstanding Paul was informed that *not a life should be lost*, but that God had given him all them that sailed with him; yet he made use of every prudent mean, for the preservation of their lives, as appears from the 17th, 18th, 19th, 31st and 38th verses of this chapter. And thus it is also with God's people in a spiritual point of view, for although Christ hath said, that they shall never perish, yet that promise does not set aside the use of those means which God hath appointed, in order to bring their salvation about.—Some indeed there are, who tauntingly say, "if I be to be saved, I shall be saved, whether I read, hear, or pray; or whether I do not," but let such remember, that as God hath appointed the salvation of his people, so also he hath

hath equally appointed every mean, which is necessary to be made use of, in order to bring about that end. And such might with as much propriety say, because there is an *appointed time* to man upon earth; (Job vii. 1.) we shall live out all that time, whether we *eat* and *drink*, or whether we do not; but surely there is no man who is possessed of common sense, but what would acknowledge it necessary for him, both to *eat* and to *drink*, in order to keep him alive his *appointed time*.

But having taken notice of the *difficulties* and *dangers* of God's people on their passage to Heaven, I proceed to take notice,

II. Of the *Certainty* of their Arrival there-- which is *emblematically* set forth in these words; and so it came to pass, *that they escaped all safe to land*: and thus it shall be with all God's children; for notwithstanding the various difficulties and dangers to which they are exposed, they shall none of them prevent their safe arrival at the land of eternal rest; the *certainty* of which is built or founded upon--

1. The *absolute promise* of a faithful and unchangeable God, who hath said by the Prophet Isaiah, *Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation*, Isai. xlv. 17. and as it is impossible for God to lie, (Heb. vi. 18.) all his *spiritual Israel* must get safe to the *land of eternal rest*; or else the promise of God must fail, and he found to be unfaithful.--But,

2. The *certainty* of the Saints arrival at glory is built also on their *redemption* by Christ; who hath redeemed them--from the curse of a broken law--from all iniquity--and from wrath to come; and we are told, that the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing to Zion, and everlasting

lasting joy shall be upon their heads; *Isai. li.* therefore it shall come to pass, that they shall all surmount their difficulties, and escape their dangers, and get safe landed at the last.

And we may observe,

3. That the *certainty* of the Saints arrival at glory, is built moreover on the *perfection* of the work of God the Spirit; concerning which the Apostle says, being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ: *Phil. i. 6.* And if so, then it shall come to pass, that they shall all escape their dangers, and get safe landed on Zion's sacred shore.

S E R M O N CII.

Matthew xii. 35.

A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

THE former part of this chapter gives us an account of Christ's casting out devils; which when the Pharisees heard of, they said, this fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils: on the impropriety of which assertion, Jesus expostulates with them; and points out the nature of that sin, of which they were now guilty: he then addresses them, saying, O generation of vipers! how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; the good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and

an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

In speaking on these words, I shall only make a few *remarks*, in the order in which they present themselves to me.

The *first* remark necessary to be made is, on the *good man* of whom our Lord speaks.—Now by a *good man*, no *natural man* is intended; for there is none good by nature, no not one; Rom. iii. 12. but by a *good man*, a *regenerate* man is to be understood, one that is renewed in the spirit of his mind, a believer in Jesus Christ, and a lover and follower of him. He is one, who in an honest and good heart, (made so by the spirit of God) hath heard the word, keeps it, and brings forth fruit with patience; Luke viii. 15. for he is taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world. Titus ii. 12. This good man is one who has—

The *life* of God in his *soul*, or

The *spirit* of God in his *heart*,

The *peace* of God in his *conscience*, and

The *power* of God in his *life* and conversation

But let us proceed to make a remark,

II. On this good man's *good Treasure*, now to be remembered brethren; that this good treasure is not what is naturally possessed by a man, (for as the Apostle, I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. Rom. vii. 18) but it is what is *put into him*, when God regenerates him by his blessed Spirit, and is no other than the *grace of God*, or what Peter calls the *divine nature*; which every regenerate person is made a partaker of, (2 Pet. i. 4.) and is that *good thing*, which was found in young *Abijah*, toward the Lord God of Israel. 1 Kings xiv. 13. No

this may be called *treasure*, because like that, it is a collection of riches ; for the regenerate soul is enriched with all the graces of the Spirit of God, each of which is more valuable than gold, silver, or precious stones—and it may be called a *good treasure*, because it is given

By a good God,
With a good design, and
For a good end.

I shall proceed now, to make a remark—

III. On the *good Things* which this *good man*, out of the *good treasure* of his heart, bringeth forth. Now, by these *good things* I presume, are intended, the things of which he speaks, when he tells his experience of what God hath done for his soul ; for then it is, that out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaketh : he speaketh

Of the *person* of Christ,
Of the *work* of Christ,
Of the *fulnes* of Christ, and
Of the *operations* of his Spirit ;

all of which *subjects*, are *good, pleasing, and profitable* to the Saints to whom he speaks.

But I must hasten now to make a remark—

IV. On the *evil Man*, of whom our Lord speaks. And here we may observe, that as by a *good man*, a regenerate man is intended : so also by an *evil man*, an unregenerate man is to be understood, that is, one who is

Without the *life* of God,
Without the *spirit* of God,
Without the *love* of God,
Without the *peace* of God, and
Ignorant of the *power* of God.

And such a man may be called an *evil man*, because

cause he possesses an *evil heart*; he mixes with the *evil world*, and is under the influence of an *evil devil*.

Having thus described the *evil man*, I shall now make a *remark*,

V. On the *evil man's, evil Treasure*. By the *evil treasure* of this *evil man*, the corruption of his nature is undoubtedly intended; or those *swarms of lusts* that reside in his heart, which is *deceitful* above all things, and desperately wicked: Jer. xv. 9. and the treasure which is contained in it, consists of *pride—ignorance—enmity—unbelief—self-will—covetousness*, and every other species of sin and corruption whatsoever; and this is not the case with *some men only*, but it is the case with *all*; though none but those who are called by grace, are feelingly sensible thereof.—And this may be called *evil treasure*, because of

Its *evil nature*,

Its *evil tendency*, and

The *evil effects* it produces.

Now, having made a remark upon this *evil treasure* I shall proceed,

VI. To make another *remark*, upon the *evil Things*, which are produced from it.

And here we may observe,

1. That this *evil treasure*, bringeth forth *evil thoughts*; for says our Lord, out of the heart proceed *evil thoughts*. Matt. xv. 19. And we are told also, that every *imagination* of the thoughts of the heart, is *only evil continually*. Gen. vi. 5.—But then as this *evil treasure* bringeth forth *evil thoughts* so also,

2. It bringeth forth *evil words*; which include not only *blasphemies* against God, but also all other

vain and unprofitable conversation. Therefore says the Apostle, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying ; that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Eph. iv. 29.

And as this evil treasure bringeth forth evil words ; so also—

3. It bringeth forth *evil actions* ; therefore says our Lord, out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies : Matt. xv. 19. hence we may see the truth of our Lord's words, that every *good tree* bringeth forth *good fruit* ; but a *corrupt tree* bringeth forth *evil fruit* ; Matt. vii. 17. or, to use the language of my text, a good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things : and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

SERMON CIII.

Luke xv. 2.

This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

THIS text was dropped by way of reproach to Jesus Christ ; but notwithstanding that, it is a text of the greatest importance, and affords the greatest encouragement to every sinner who is feelingly sensible of his *lost, guilty, and helpless state* and condition : on whose account it is, that I have made choice of it for our present consideration ;—and in speaking on which, I shall take notice,

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I. Of

- I. Of *this Man* spoken of,
- II. Of the *Charge* brought against him, and
- III. Of the *Characters* who brought it.

First then, I am to take notice of *this Man*, who is spoken of. By the man spoken of, there can be no doubt I think, of *Christ* being intended, who here makes his appearance in the character of a *minister*, or teacher; therefore it is said in the verse which precedes my text, that then drew nigh unto him all the *publicans* and *sinners* for to hear him; that is, to hear his doctrine which he preached. Now, however contemptibly these people might think and speak of *Christ*, be it remembered brethren, that this man was no other than the *promised seed*, who is spoken of in Genesis iii. 15. and the *Shilsh*, or *peace-maker*, who is mentioned in Genesis xlix. 10.

But we may observe moreover,

That *this man* is the very identical person, of whom the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, and by whom he is called, THE MIGHTY GOD; for says he, unto us a *Child* is born, unto us a *Son* is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, *Isai.* ix. 6. and this same man is spoken of also, by the Prophet *Jeremiab*; as the LORD, or JEHOVAH our RIGHTEOUSNESS; and when the Apostle Paul was speaking of *this man*, he says that God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory *1 Tim.* iii. 16. Now this is the man, the *exact* man; even the God-man *Christ Jesus*, who is spoken of in the words of my text; and as he is God as well as man, he is every way qualified to atone for sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity.

city, Dan. ix. 24. as he is also to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by him. Heb. vii. 25. This is the *foundation* which God hath laid in *Zion*, Isai. xxviii. 16. neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts iv. 12.

But having taken notice of *this man*, who is spoken of in my text, I shall proceed as proposed,

II. To take notice of the *Charge* brought against him; which is, that *he receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.*—Now, though this is exhibited in the form of a *charge* against Christ; yet blessed be God it is a glorious *truth*, for which all his *own people* will have cause to praise him, through the council's acts of a never-ending eternity; for they are

Sinners by *imputation*,

Sinners by *nature*, and

Sinners by *practice*,

as others also are; and had it not been that Christ came into the world to *save sinners*; 1 Tim. i. 15. they must have lived and died in their *lost state* and condition, and have been *punished* with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. 2 Thes. i. 9. But blessed be God for the truth contained in my text, namely, that *this man receiveth sinners.*

Now be it remembered brethren, that Christ received his people in the covenant of grace, at the hands of his *Father*, as his *portion*; for the *Lord's portion* is his *people*, Deut. xxxii. 9. which people were to be *preserved* and *saved* by him, with

A *present*, and

An *everlasting* salvation:

for which purpose it is, that they became *quickened* by God the Spirit—*convinced* of their lost, ruined

Qq 2

and

and helpless condition—and made *willing* to apply to *Christ* as the *only Saviour*, who on their thus returning to him, *receiveth them openly*, from among the *men of the world*, into his arms, which are ever open to *returning prodigals*. And as *Christ* receives his people into the *arms* of his *mercy* here, so also, he will *receive* them in the *day of judgment*; with some ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 34. And thus it is, that *this man* receiveth sinners, even the *chief of sinners*. 1 Tim. i. 15.

But another part of this *charge*, which is brought against *Christ* is, that *he eateth with them*; as he did in the house of *Matthew* the publican, and of *Zaccheus*—and, which (blessed be God) he does now, in a *spiritual sense*, with all his people who are regenerated by his blessed Spirit; for he *sups with them*, and *they with him*: Rev. iii. 20. that is, he delights himself in the exercise of those graces, which he himself is the *donor* and author of; and they are admitted to the provisions of his house, and are brought to live by faith on *him*, who is the bread of life.

But having taken notice of the *charge*—I shall proceed now,

III. To the *Characters* who brought it; which the words immediately before my text tell us, were the *Pharisees* and *Scribes*; of whom it is said they murmured, on account of the notice which *Christ* took of *sinners*. This is exemplified also in the conduct of *Simon*, respecting *Mary Magdalene*, who, when he saw what passed between *Christ* and her, he spake within himself, that is, he *muttered* or *murmured* saying; if this man were a *Prophet*, he would have known *who*, and *what manner* of woman this is that toucheth him: for *she is a sinner*.

Pharisee, that is a *notorious sinner*. Luke vii. 39. And this also is the conduct of *Pharisees* in this our day, they thinking themselves *holier* than others, (Mat. lxxv. 5,) are vexed, and murmur at the notice which Christ takes of *sinners*, and when God distinguishes by his grace, one who like *Mary* of old, has been a *notorious sinner*, they call his conduct in question; and though Christ has received him openly into his arms, and into communion with him, such is their *pride* and *self-righteousness*, that they *reproach* him in their minds, murmur at his conduct, and stand at a distance from the sinner, who is revived by him.

SERMON CIV.

Luke xxii. 31, 32.

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.

IN the former part of this chapter, we find the chief Priests and Scribes conspiring against Christ, and Judas covenanting to betray him—we find also, that Christ eateth the *Passover* with the twelve Apostles, and institutes what is commonly called the *Lord's Supper*.—And after silencing a strife that was among them concerning who should be greatest; he addresses them, saying, ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations: and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.—After which he addresses Peter particularly, saying in the words of my text, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have

you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.

In these words *two* things are evidently contained, namely,

- I. Satan's *Desire* towards Peter, and
- II. Christ's *Care* of him.

First then, let us attend to *Satan's Desire* towards Peter, it is expressed in these words, *Satan hath desired to have you.* Now, he has the very same desire observe, towards *all God's people* in every age of the world; though his malice is particularly levelled against the *ministers* of the gospel of Christ. Accordingly we are informed, that he is called the accuser of the *brethren*, Rev. xii. 10. and the Apostle Peter, when speaking of him says, your adversary the *Devil*, as a *roaring lion*, walketh about, seeking whom he MAY devour. 1 Peter v. 8. We may learn from this text, that Satan is an *adversary*, or an opposer of every thing that is good; he is

- An adversary to God,
- An adversary to man,
- An adversary to Christ,
- An adversary to salvation,
- An adversary to holiness, and
- An adversary to happiness.

We may learn also, that Satan is *diligent* in what he is about, for he *walketh about* as a *roaring*, or an *enraged lion*, seeking whom he may devour. From whence we may learn, that Satan cannot devour, destroy a single individual, without divine permission; but notwithstanding that, we find, he has desire so to do; for says our Lord to Peter, *Satan hath desired to have you:* and not only *you Peter* (as much as though our Lord had said) but a

all you my *Apostles*, nay even all my *Church* and *people*.

He desires to have their *lives*,

He desires to have their *bodies*,

He desires to have their *souls*,

He desires to have them under his *power*, and

He desires to have them in his *hand*.

But for what purpose is it that Satan desires to have God's people? my text says, that he may *sift* (them) as wheat; which he may be said to do, both by his *temptations* and by raising *persecution* against them.—Now by Satan's thus *sifting* God's people, he does not mean to separate the *chaff* from the *wheat*: but he means thereby to make them look like *all chaff*, by covering the *wheat of grace*, with the *chaff of sin* and *corruption*: to accomplish which, he tosses them to and fro with his *temptations*, as wheat is tossed in a sieve.

But having taken notice of *Satan's desire* towards *Peter*; I proceed now to take notice,

II. Of *Christ's Care* of him—which is expressed in these words, but I have *prayed for thee*, that thy *faith fail not*.

Now from this part of our subject we may learn—

I. That *Peter had faith*, and consequently was a regenerate, or *converted* man; which some are led to deny, on account of those words, which immediately follow my text, namely, when thou art *converted*, strengthen thy brethren; in which words, our Lord undoubtedly alluded to his *recovery* from that *sin* into which he was at this time fallen, and not to his *first conversion*, which had taken place some time before this circumstance.

But we may observe here, that this faith which *Peter* possessed, was not a *natural*, but a *supernatural* blessing, the gift of God; Eph. ii. 8. and of the

The operation of his Spirit, Col. ii. 12. and was received from the fulness of Christ, who is both the *author* and *finisher* thereof, Heb. xii. 2. as well as the *object* to whom it leads. The *essence* of this *faith*, which Peter possessed, was a *grace* of the spirit of God, by which he believed to the saving of his soul. It was a *grace* too *spiritual* to grow out of a *natural* man, and too *heavenly* for an *earthly* man to produce. In short, this *faith* was a *living, acting principle* in the *heart*, and is that by which the heart becomes *purified*, (Acts xv. 9.) or *sanctified*. Accordingly we are told, that all God's people will receive an inheritance among them, who are *sanctified by faith*, that is in Christ. Acts xxvi. 18.

But from this part of our text, we may learn also,

2. Christ's *love* to, and *care* of Peter, which are manifest in these words, *I have prayed for thee*; and this is what he did not only for Peter, but what he has done, does now, and will do for all those, who are the purchase of his own blood; for he ever liveth to make *intercession* for them; Heb. vii. 25, the substance of which is this, Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast *given* me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.—John xvii. 24. This is sure to be granted by the Father, for says Christ, I know that thou hearest me always.—John xi. 42. And if Christ pray for the *glorification* of his people, and his Father always hear, or answer him; then it must necessarily follow, that all his own people must be glorified with him; and indeed, where the head is, there the members must be also.—But,

3. That for which Christ prayed at this time was; that Peter's *faith* might not *fail*, and he being always heard in the thing which he asks, therefore it was that *Peter's faith did not fail*.—But

We

We may observe here, that it is necessary to make a distinction between the *essence* and *actings* of faith, or between faith as a principle of grace, and the exercise thereof. Now be it remembered brethren, that through the power of sin, and the force of temptation, faith may *fail* in some degree as to its *actings* and *exercise*, as it did in Peter, but it can never fail as to its *essence*, or considered as a *principle of grace* in the heart; for as such, it is *immortal* and *inerruptible* seed, of which Christ is both the author and the finisher.

But this passage was not written, I presume, for the *comfort* and *encouragement* of Peter only, but for the comfort and encouragement of all God's people in every age of the world; who when they are *tempted* by Satan, or *tossed* about by his temptations, should call to mind the words of our Lord contained in my text, *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*; on which subject he is sure to be heard, for though faith may fail as to its *exercise*, it shall never fail as a *grace of the spirit* in the hearts of God's people, any more than it did in the heart of Peter.

SERMON CV.

Titus ii. 14.

He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

In the former part of this chapter, Paul gives Titus proper directions both for his *doctrine* and *life*. He bids him exhort *servants* to be obedient unto

unto their own *masters*, and to please them well in all things; *not answering again*; not purloining, that is, pilfering or stealing their property, but shewing all good *fidelity*, or faithfulness in their service for this end; that they may adorn the doctrine of *God our Saviour*, in all things; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

These words contain three ideas, which are,

- I. *That Christ gave himself,*
- II. *For Whom he gave himself, and*
- III. *For what End he gave himself.*

First, we may observe—*That Christ gave himself* mark the expression brethren, and take notice of the *giver*, and you will find him to be none other than the *GREAT GOD*, and (or even) our *Saviour Jesus Christ*. Hence we may learn, that our *Saviour Jesus Christ*, is the *Great God*: agreeable to this same Apostle's words where he says, who over all, *God blessed*, or *praised for ever*; (Rom. ix. 5.) by all the *Saints* upon Earth, and glorified *Spirits* in Heaven.

But we may observe also, that this *GREAT GOD* even our *Saviour Jesus Christ*, gave himself, which is certainly an expression of *great love*; for many brethren, Christ did not give his *own things*, but his *own self*; even his *whole manhood*, consisting of human body, and a reasonable soul; therefore we are told by the Prophet *Isaiah*, that it pleased the *LORD* (the Father) to *bruise him*, that it pleased him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper his hand. *Isai. liii. 10.* Thus we find that Je-

gave himself, body and soul, and that in union with his divine person—he gave himself

Into the hands of men,
Into the hands of justice, and
Into the hands of death;

for he gave his life a ransom for many; all of which acts were done by Christ voluntarily and freely for none could compel him to undertake the redemption of men; nor could any compel him to give himself for them, or to die in their room and stead; therefore we are told, that Christ laid down his life, John x. 17. not by constraint or compulsion, but he laid it down freely, willingly and voluntarily.

Not having shewn you, that Christ gave himself—I shall proceed to shew,

II. For Whom he gave himself; my text says—he gave himself for us: that is, not only for himself and Titus to whom he was writing, but for all the elect of God, spoken of in the first verse of this Epistle.

These are the persons on whom the Father fixed his love, before the foundation of the world; and whom he chose and blessed in Christ as early, Eph. i. 4. and gave them to Christ to be redeemed by him. Accordingly it is said in the Acts of the Apostles; feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts xx. 28. They are the sheep of whom our Lord speaks in the gospel by Saint John, wherein it is said; I lay down my life for my sheep, John x. 15. which when he gives a description of, he says, my sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. John x. 27.

But the persons for whom Christ gave himself, are described moreover in the 12th verse of this chapter out of which my text is taken, as a people called by grace, or regenerated by God the spirit,

spirit, by which they are taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, which is a manifestation of their being the *elect of God*, and those persons for whom Christ gave himself.—He gave himself for them by *promise* in the covenant of grace; when he said, lo I come to do thy will, O God. Heb. x. 9. Therefore Christ is called a lamb slain, (that is in the purpose of God) from the foundation of the world: Rev. xiii. 8. And he gave himself for them, as his own voluntary act and deed, when he died upon the cross, where he said, it is finished, and then he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. John xix. 30.

But this leads me to shew,

III. For *what End* he gave himself, my text tells us it was,

1. That he might redeem us from all iniquity. We may observe here, that sin brings into bondage and slavery, and redemption is a deliverance from it. Sin binds guilt upon the sinner, and lays him under obligation to punishment, for cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them: Gal. iii. 10. which curse must have been executed on the sinner himself, had not Christ the surety of his people taken their sins upon himself; but we are informed that he was made sin for them, 2 Cor. v. 21. as if the Father laid, or caused to meet upon him the iniquity of them all. (Isai. liii. 6.) He therefore as his people's surety, was made a curse for them, and they are redeemed from it, for says the Apostle, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Gal. iii. 13.

But let us take notice of the completeness of the redemption; for it is a redemption from ALL INIQUITY.

guity, from all *original* and *actual* iniquity, from all iniquitous *thoughts, words* and *actions*, nor was there a single sin of God's people left out of the account, when Christ reckoned with his Father on their behalf, but all were atoned for and justice was satisfied.

But the text tells us moreover, that Christ not only gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; but also that he might purify unto himself a *peculiar* people, zealous of good works. From whence we may learn, that *purification* is necessary; for all mankind are by nature *filthy* and *unclean*, therefore it is said, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God: John iii. 3. and we are informed also, that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. Heb. xii. 14.

But Christ's redeemed ones are *purified* unto himself; that is, for his own use and service, and for his own glory; to make them meet for communion with himself here, and for the enjoyment of himself hereafter.—And these people thus *purified* are called in my text, a *peculiar* people; they are

Loved with a peculiar love,
Redeemed with a peculiar price,
Enriched with peculiar blessings,
Watched over with a peculiar care,
Live a peculiar life, and
Die a peculiar death.

Now these people thus *purified* or *sanctified*, become zealous of good works; not in order to their justification before God; but in obedience to the will of God, to testify their love to God, for the credit of religion, and the good of their fellow-men; for such good works we are told, they are zealous; that is, they strive to go before, and excel each other in the performance of them.

SERMON CVI.

1 Timothy ii. 6.

Who gave himself a ransom for all.—

THESE words are frequently produced by some in order to prove the doctrine of *universal redemption*; but whether they will answer that purpose or not, shall be my employment in this discourse to enquire into; and in doing which, I shall shew you,

- I. What the Text *does not* mean, and
- II. What it *does* mean.

First then, I am to shew you what the Text *does not* mean. Under this head we may observe, that there are many who insist upon it, that the plain meaning of the text is, “that Christ gave himself a ransom for ALL that ever did, do now, or that ever shall descend from the loins of *Adam*, by ordinary generation.” Now the whole of this mistake seems to arise, from taking the word ALL in an *unlimited* sense, which ought not always to be done. This will obviously appear by the following passages of scripture.

We are told in the gospel by Saint *Matthe* that then went out to him (*John*) *Jerusalem*, and *all Judea*, &c. now it is evident, I think, that *Jerusalem*, ALL the inhabitants thereof are not intended; as it is also, that by *all Judea*, every individual is not meant; but *all such* only, who confessed *their sins*, went to *John* and were baptized by him. *Matt. iii. 5, 6.*—But again,

It is said of Christ in the gospel by Saint *Mar*,
that *ALL men seek for thee*. Mark i. 37. but then by
all men in this text, *every man* cannot be intended ;
for there never was a time when *every man* sought
for Christ. By the word *ALL* therefore, only a large
number can be intended.

It is said moreover of the man, who had been
possessed with the Devil ; that when he began to
publish at *Decapolis*, how great things Jesus had
done for him, *all men did marvel*. Mark v. 20.
Now by this word *ALL* every individual cannot
possibly be intended ; but *all those only*, to whom
he published these things.

We may observe again, that in *John's* gospel
Christ says ; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth,
will draw *ALL MEN* unto me. John xii. 32. But
it is evident that by the word *ALL* in this text,
every individual cannot be intended ; but it alludes
to that *large company only*, which was gathered to-
gether at the crucifixion of Christ.

It is said also by the Apostle Paul ; I please *all*
men in *all things*. I Cor. x. 33. But then, by *all*
men every individual is not intended ; for in fact,
he pleased but *few* in any thing ; and that is the
reason he was *persecuted* from city to city.

This same Apostle also exhorts servants to be
obedient unto their own masters in *all things*. (Titus
ii. 9.) But then by *all things*, we are only to un-
derstand *all lawful things* ; for if we take into
our view *unlawful things*, Paul might then be ac-
cused of encouraging servants to yield to sin, should
their masters be so wicked as to require it of them.

It is said moreover, at the *eleventh verse* of the
above-mentioned chapter, that the grace of God
bringeth salvation, hath appeared to *ALL men*.
Now by the *grace of God* in this text, the *gospel* of

his grace is intended; but then, by its appearing to *all men*, every individual cannot be intended; for there were many *then*, as there are also to this very day, to whom the gospel had not made its appearance. From these passages, and from many more which might be produced, it appears that the word *ALL*, does not always mean *every individual*; therefore it ought not always to be taken in an *unlimited* sense.

But let us proceed and take notice of the *consequences* of understanding the word *ALL* in my text, to mean *every individual*;—

For, it should be observed, that this *ransom* is a *vicarious*, or deputed ransom, *substituted* in the room and stead of *ALL*; by which a full price was paid for *ALL*, and satisfaction made for the sins of *ALL*; and then it must necessarily follow that *ALL men* must go to Heaven, or God to whom the ransom price was paid, must be unjust; and then this would contradict Christ's own words, where he says, broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; Matt. vii. 13. But notwithstanding which, for men to hold with *universal redemption*, and to deny *universal salvation*, is inconsistent and absurd to the last degree; for if Christ have *ransomed ALL*, then *ALL* are delivered from—The charge of sin,

The curse of the law, and

From eternal death thereby;

in consequence of which, *all such* shall be regenerated and delivered from the *guilt, love, and dominion* of sin, and out of the hands of Satan; for *those who are redeemed by Christ*, shall be wrought upon by the spirit, made meet for communion with God here, and for the enjoyment of God hereafter. But as the spirit does not regenerate *ALL men*, it

So *ALL* men go to heaven, it necessarily follows; that all men are not redeemed by Christ. This therefore is *not* the meaning of my text now under consideration.

But having shewn you what the text does *not* mean, I shall proceed to shew you,

II. What it *does* mean.—Under this head we may observe, that this is one of those texts in which the word *ALL*, is *not* to be understood in an *unlimited*, but in a limited sense, and its meaning sought for, in other passages of God's word.

The word *ALL* in this text, is I presume, of the same import to the word *MANY* in Matthew's gospel, where we are informed, that the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a *ransom* for *MANY*, Matt. xx. 28. even the *many* SONS (by adoption) which Christ the captain of salvation has engaged to bring to glory. Heb. ii. 10.—But

This text now under consideration, is further explained by John vi. 37. wherein it is said, *ALL* that the Father *giveth* me shall come to me; and this is the *ALL*, for which Christ gave himself a *ransom*.

It is also explained in the 10th chapter and 15th verse, where our Lord speaks of himself in the character of a good *shepherd*, and says, I lay down my life for my *SHEEP*. So that the word *ALL* in my text refers to *all the sheep* of Christ and to none else.—But

All those for whom Christ gave himself a ransom are described moreover, in the *Acts* of the *apostles*, as the *CHURCH* of *GOD* therefore it is to feed the *Church of God*, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts xx. 28. And when

it is said, as in my text, that Christ gave himself a *ransom* for ALL, it evidently means,

For all the *sons* by adoption,

For all that the Father *giveth* Christ,

For all his *sheep*; or

For all the *Church* only,

for these Christ was slain, and hath redeemed them to God by his blood; *out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation* : Rev. v. 9. these are the ALL *men* whom Christ wills to be saved, and to come to the *knowledge of the truth*. (verse 4th.) And as among these, are men of all sorts, or some of every rank; therefore it is, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks are to be made for *all men*; that is, for men of all ranks for kings, and for all that are in authority, &c. see verses 11th and 2d.

But should any object to what has been said on this subject, and say, the Apostle tells us, that Christ by the grace of God *tasted death for every man* Heb. ii. 9. We have to observe here, that the word *man* is not in the original text, but may be translated, *for every one*; that is, for every one of the *sons* mentioned in the 10th verse; for every one of the *brethren* whom he sanctifies, and of whom he is not ashamed; (verse 11th) for every one of the *children*, which God hath given to him; (ver. 13) and for every one of the *seed of Abraham*, in a spiritual sense, who are mentioned in the 16th verse of the above chapter. From what has been said we may learn, that the text on which we have been meditating, does not afford a single argument to support the doctrine of *universal redemption*; that could such an idea be found therein, it would equally support the doctrine of *universal salvation* or else reflect dishonor on the justice of God, who has received the *ransom price* at the hands of Christ.

SERMON

SERMON CVII.

John ix. 16.

—*This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day.*—

THE foregoing part of this chapter gives us an account of a man, who was born blind, and on whom Christ performed a miracle in opening his eyes. This cure, the man readily ascribes to Christ, who performed it, and relates every circumstance relative thereto, with the greatest plainness and simplicity.—They brought the man however to the *Pharisees*, who interrogated him particularly on the subject, and to whom also he gave the same answer, which he had given before; and because it was the *sabbath day* on which Christ performed this cure; they said in the words of my text; *this man is not of God; because he keepeth not the sabbath day*; and had the *charge* which was brought against Christ been *true*, the *conclusion* would have been *true*; but as the charge brought against him was *false*, the conclusion drawn was false also.—But notwithstanding the *charge* of *sabbath-breaking* was not applicable to Christ; it is applicable to too many who make a profession of him, on whose account it is, that I have made choice of the passage now before me.—In speaking on which, I shall take notice,

I. Of the *Charge*, and

II. Of the *Conclusion* drawn from it.

First then, with respect to the *Charge*, it is contained in these words—*he keepeth not the sabbath day.*

Now,

Now, this day is called in the revelation of St. John, *the Lord's day*, for says he, I was in the spirit on the *Lord's day*, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. Rev. i. 10. And the sabbath day may be called the *Lord's day*, because it is a day of his own appointing, or setting apart, as a day of cessation from labour, (Exod. xx. 10.) to be employed more immediately in his service. Ezek. xlvi. 3. Therefore it is said, remember the *sabbath day* to keep it *holy*; Exod. xx. 8. that is, by *abstaining* from your *ordinary business*, and *spending* it in *religious exercises*, both private and public; and whosoever does the *former*, or neglects the *latter*, that man breaks the sabbath; or it may be said of him, *he keepeth not the sabbath-day*; but applies to common uses or purposes, the day which God hath *hallowed*, separated, or set apart for his own use and service *only*, as for

Hearing the gospel,
Reading the scriptures,
Meditating on them,
Praying unto him, and
Praising his holy name:

and whosoever omits the above-mentioned religious exercises on the Lord's day, of that man it may be said, *he keepeth not the sabbath day*.—

But then, be it remembered brethren, that there are many, who *abstain* from their ordinary business on the *sabbath day*, and yet it may be said of them that *they keep it not*. Such (for instance) are those who fix upon the sabbaths for days of recreation and *diversion*; either by *strolling about the country* or by *collecting parties at their houses*; by which means, the duties of religion are neglected, and the day made use of, for sinful purposes.

This is the conduct I fear, of too many professors of religion; though a conduct which can never

be too much reprobated, either in public, or in private; because it is a conduct which is a dishonor to God, and a disgrace to religion, as well as to the minister under whom they sit, and the people with whom they are connected. It is a conduct which at once betrays the carnality of their minds, and the little relish they have for the service of God; and the charge in my text is applicable to all such, namely, *they keep not the sabbath day*; and shall not God visit for these things? yes, he has visited, he does visit, and will visit, for the neglect and contempt of that day; of which he hath said, thou shalt keep it holy; that is, devoted to him and free from common uses. See Nehem. xiii. 15—21.

But on the contrary it is said, if thou turn away thy foot from (or on) the sabbath, from doing *thy pleasure on my holy day*; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable: and shall honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father. Isai. lviii. 13, 14. Hence we may see the truth of those words, them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. 1 Sam. ii. 30. But should any ask, are there no kinds of works to be done on the sabbath day? I answer yes,

Works of necessity,

Works of mercy, and

Works of piety or devotion.

That works of necessity may be done, appears from our Lord's words, where he says; which of you shall have an ass, or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? Luke xiv. 5. intimating no doubt that it would be lawful so to do.—That works of mercy may

may be done on the *sabbath day*, is obvious from my text now under consideration, (see also Luke xiii. 14.) and that works of *piety* and *devotion* may, and ought to be done on the above-mentioned day, appears from our Lord's own conduct, who went into the Synagogues and *taught* on the sabbath day; Luke xiii. 10. therefore, all these kinds of works may be done on the sabbath day, without any breach thereof.

But having taken notice of the *charge*, I shall proceed now to take notice,

II. Of the *Conclusion* drawn from it; it is expressed in these words, *this man is not of God*; that is, the *man* who wilfully and *habitually* breaks the sabbath day.

1. He is not of God by *birth*; for were he born of God, or created anew in Christ Jesus, it would be unto *good works*, which God hath ordained his people to walk in; agreeable to what the Apostle says, in Ephesians ii. 10. beside, were he *of God* in this sense; he would possess the *grace of God* in his heart, which would teach him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world, as the Apostle expresses it in Titus ii. 12.—Again,

2. The *sabbath-breaker* is not of *God's teaching*; for were that the case, he would be taught to have *regard* unto that day, for God the spirit never teaches a man to act contrary to his own word, in this, or any other respect whatsoever. But as he is not *of God's teaching*, so neither is he

3. *Of God's leading or guiding*; for as he is *the spirit of truth*, so likewise he leads and guides into all *truth*; (John xvi. 13) but *sabbath-breaking* is an *error*, therefore the spirit of God cannot lead a man into it,

4. Nor is the man who *habitually breaks the Sabbath*; of the number of *God's servants*, for were he a servant of God, he would attend to his word; and by his conduct in life, would endeavour to promote his glory, for he that is *of God*, says Christ; heareth God's words, ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God, (John viii. 47.) that is, such are—Not *born* of God,

Not *taught* of God,

Not *led* by God,

Nor are they the *servants* of God;

but servants of *sin* and *Satan*; in whose service, if they live and die; they must be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. 2 Thes. i. 9.

SERMON CVIII.

Ezekiel iii. 17.

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

IN the former part of this chapter, we have an account of Ezekiel's eating the roll; not literally, but figuratively, (as John did the little book, mentioned in Revelations x. 9, 10.) by which we are to understand, that the Prophet *read it, meditated on the things contained therein, and well digested them*, that he might be able to make them known to others. This is explained in the 10th verse, where it is said, *all my words that I shall speak unto thee, receive into thine heart, and hear with thine ears.*—The Lord then proceeds to encourage

courage and instruct the Prophet in his work, who after a certain time mentioned, has a fresh call to his office, under the character of a *watchman*; for says he, the word of the Lord came unto me saying, son of man, I have made thee a *watchman* unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

In speaking on these words, I shall,

- I. Take notice of the *Watchman*, and
- II. Of the *Direction* given to him.

First then, I am to take notice of the *Watchman*; by whom we are to understand not a watchman in a civil, but in an ecclesiastical sense; that is to say, a teacher, or minister of God's word. Such are called by the name of *watchmen* in the book of *Canticles*, as they are also, in other parts of the word of God.

Now, be it remembered brethren, that the *watchman* spoken of in my text, was made by the Lord himself; for when addressing the Prophet, he says, *I have made thee a watchman*: and thus it was also with the Apostle Paul, to whom the Lord said, arise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister (Acts xxvi. 16.) or a *watchman*.

But then, we may observe here, that when the Lord makes *watchmen*, he never makes choice of *dead men* for that purpose; because he well knows that men of this description, would not be able to fill up that character, or discharge the duty incumbent on them. Therefore it is, that he always makes choice of those for this office, to whom he has communicated a *principle of divine life*. Eph. ii. 1.—But,

As he does not make choice of *dead men* for *watchmen*

watchmen, so neither does he make choice of *blind men* for that office; because he very well knows, that such characters are not likely to discharge the duty of that office; therefore it is, that he chooses them from among those, whose understandings are enlightened to see their state by nature and practice, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ; for if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. Matt. xv. 14.

But again, as the Lord doth not make choice of *blind men*; so neither doth he make choice of *men* who are *dumb*, for the office of *watchmen*; because he well knows, that they cannot discharge the duty incumbent on them in that office. The Lord therefore complains of such, saying; his *watchmen* are *blind*: they are all ignorant; they are all *dumb dogs*, that cannot bark. *Isai. lvi. 10.* Therefore when he makes choice of *watchmen*, he first opens their hearts, then their lips, and their mouths will shew forth his praise. *Psal. li. 15.*

Now, that the above-mentioned persons, are not proper persons for *watchmen*, will appear obviously from the work that they have to do; which is

To go about the city, Song iii. 3. and

To give the *alarm* when danger approaches, as appears from the words of my text. From these observations it evidently appears, that neither *deaf*, *blind*, nor *dumb men*, are proper for the office of *watchmen*; nor is it likely that God should appoint such for that office.—But, it is worthy of a remark also, that they are not angels, but *sons of men*, that are put into this office; even men, who are subject to like passions with those over whom they watch, which my text tells us, is *the house of Israel*, or a Church, is a *house of God's building*, 1 Peter ii. 5. in which he dwells, *Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14.* and is the *dwelling of the spiritual Israel of God.* John i. 47.

But having taken notice of the *watchman*, I come now to take notice,

II. Of the *Direction* given to him—it is contained in these words, therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them *warning* from me. —They are to be warned

1. *Against sin*, for that is a reproach to any people. Prov. xiv. 34. In doing which, God's ministers are to hear the word at his mouth, which is he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul, (Prov. viii. 36.) he also dishonors ME——and disgraces religion. Therefore warn them against this enemy, tell them, if (my) children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with a *rod*, and their iniquities with *stripes*. Psal. lxxxix. 30—32.

2. *Warn* them also, against the *devices* of Satan, of which God's ministers, or watchmen are not ignorant, as appears from the Apostle's words *we are not ignorant of his devices*. 2 Cor. ii. 11. Warn them against this adversary; in doing which hear the word at God's mouth, inform the house of Israel, that *their adversary the Devil*, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Peter v. 8. Advise them also to resist him steadfast in the faith; and tell them, that by so doing he will flee from them. James iv. 7.—Again,

3. Give them *warning* also against the *world*, tell them from me, that whosoever will be a friend of the world, is the *enemy* of God. James iv. 4. Warn them therefore, against all *unnecessary* connexion with the world, advise them to come out from among them, and be separate from them. 2 Cor. vi. 17. *Warn* them also of what will be the consequence thereof, tell them from me, that

cause I have chosen them out of the world, therefore the world hateth them; at which they need not marvel, for it hated me, before it hated them. John xv. 18, 19.—And,

* Warn the house of Israel moreover, against *false teachers* and their *false doctrines* delivered by them. If *Christ's divinity* be denied by them, tell Israel from me, that he is the *mighty God*, *Isai. ix. 6.* the King of kings and the Lord of lords, *1 Tim. vi. 15.* and that he is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen. *Rom. ix. 5.* Should the doctrine of *election* be denied by these false teachers, tell the *house of Israel*, that I have chosen my people in Christ before the foundation of the world, *Eph. i. 4.* and that they are preserved in Christ Jesus and called. *Jude 1st.*

Should they assert *salvation by works*, hear the word at my mouth, and tell the house of Israel, that by grace they are saved through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. *Eph. ii. 8.*—And should these false teachers falsely assert, that *the Saints of God may fall into Hell*; hear the word at God's mouth, and tell the house of Israel that he hath said, my sheep shall *never perish*, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand; *John x. 28.* but he that hath begun a good work in them, will perform it, until the day of Jesus Christ, (*Phil. i. 6.*) who will welcome them at the last with, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. *Matt. xxv. 34.*

S E R M O N C I X.

Exodus xx. 24.

--In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

IN this chapter we have an account of God's giving the law on mount *Sinai*, of the circumstances attending it, and of the effect it had upon the people, in causing them to remove at some distance from the *mount*, and requesting that *Moses* would speak to them, and not God, lest they should die. On which *Moses* encouraged them, saying, *fear not*; and then drew near unto the thick darkness where God was; who ordered him to caution the children of *Israel* against *idolatry*, and directed what sort of an *altar* he would have made, whereon to offer their sacrifices, saying at the same time, that in all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

In speaking on which words, I shall shew,

- I. What is meant by the *Name* of the Lord.
- II. What is implied in *recording* it, and
- III. Take notice of the *Promise* made to those who assemble there.

First then, I am to shew what is meant by the *Name* of the Lord.

Under which head we may observe,

- I. That sometimes by the *name* of God, his nature and perfections are intended. This I presume is, what we are to understand by the word *NAME*, in Exodus xxiii. 21. where the Lord says (when speaking of Christ, the *angel of the everlasting covenant*;) beware of him, and obey his voice, pro-

voke him not: for he will not *pardon* your iniquities, that is, he will not pass them by without *chastisement*, for *my name* is in him, that is to say, *my nature and perfections* are in him.—Again,

2. Sometimes by *the name of God*, his *love, grace, and mercy* are intended. This appears, I think, to be the meaning of the term *NAME*, in Psal. xxii. 22. and Heb. ii. 12. where Christ is represented to be saying: I will declare *THY NAME* unto my *brethren*; that is, I will declare, or publish to them *thy love, thy grace, and thy mercy*; all of which are declared in God's word, for the comfort and encouragement of all *Christ's brethren*, or true believers in him.—But,

3. At other times, by *the name of God*, *CHRIST* is to be understood. This undoubtedly is the meaning of the term, in the book of Proverbs, where it is said; *the name of the Lord is a strong tower*; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. Prov. xviii. 10. In which passage, we have not only represented to our view, that Christ is a *place of defence*; (Isai. xxxii. 2.) but also the *use* which the righteous make of him, in running to him by faith, and their *safety* in so doing; they are safe.—From the *curse* of the law,

From the *band* of justice, and

From *all* their *enemies*.

But having shewn you what is meant by the *name of the Lord*; I proceed to shew,

II. What is meant by *recording it*. And here we may observe, that to *record*, is *solemnly to register, to celebrate, or to praise*. Now God may be said to *record his name*, wherever he causes it to be *called upon, or remembered* by his people; through the manifestation of his *goodness* to their souls, and the display of the glory of his *perfections*, in the plan of

salvation by Jesus Christ; which things ought more particularly to be done, in all places which are set apart for *public worship*.

Now that *prayer* is one part of *public worship*, is obvious from the whole of Solomon's language, at the dedication of the *temple*, in the sixth chapter of the second book of Chronicles; towards the close of which, he says; now my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears attend unto the *prayer* that is made in *this place*. It appears also, from the conduct of the *two men* of whom we read in the gospel by Saint Luke, and of whom it is said, *they went up to the temple to pray*; Luke xviii. 10. and for people to make a common practice, of not going to the house of God till that part of divine worship is over; it proves to a demonstration, that they have little regard for the *name of God*, and still less for *communion* with him; and such tacitly tell us, that they have nothing to *ask* at the hands of God, nor have they any thing to *praise* him for.

But as *God's name* may be said to be recorded where he causes it to be called upon: so also it is recorded where the glory of his *perfections* are set forth, in *preaching* salvation by Jesus Christ; that is, where mention is made of his *name*, as the *only name* in which salvation is; (Acts iv. 12.) where his glorious *person* as God-Man, *mediator* is spoke of; his *righteousness* set forth, for the justification of his people before God; and his *gracefulness* exhibited, for the supply of his people's wants. John 16. These are the places in which *God's name* is recorded; these are the places in which he makes known his name; (that is, his *nature*, his *perfections*, and his *son Jesus Christ*) to the heart of his people; and brings them thereby to put their trust in him. Psal. ix. 10.—But I come now,
III.

III. To take notice of the *Promise* made to those who assemble in these places.—It is contained in these words—I will *come* unto them, and I will *blest* them.

First then, we find that God promises his presence in the public assemblies of his people—I will *come unto them*—that is, in a spiritual manner, by the communications of my grace to their souls, as mentioned in John xiv. 21. where it is said by Christ, I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. see also Matt. xviii. 20.—But,

Secondly, The Lord says also in my text, *I will blest them*, that is, I will blest them with my presence; than which, nothing can be more desirable to a gracious soul—I will blest them with the *discoveries* of my *pardonning love*:—I will blest them with the *enjoyment* of that *peace*, which the world can neither give nor take away:—I will blest them with *fresh supplies of grace*, to enable them to withstand their trials and temptations, and to persevere to the end of their lives—and I will blest them at last, with the *enjoyment* of that *inheritance*, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; and since God will thus blest his people, who assemble in those places, where he records his name; well might the Apostle say, *for sake not the assembling of yourselves together*. Heb. x. 25.

SERMON CX.

Jude 21.

Keep yourselves in the love of God—

THESE words are often produced by some, to prove that the Saint's continuance in the *love* or *favour* of God, depends on their obedience, care, and keeping of themselves; and that there is a possibility

possibility of falling from it; and consequently, that they are not *absolutely elected to everlasting life*. But that these conclusions are false, I hope to make appear, in what follows; and in discouraging on the words of my text, I shall shew—

- I. What is meant by the *Love of God*, and
- II. What is implied in *keeping ourselves in it*.

First then, I am to shew what is meant by the *Love of God*, under which head, *two ideas* will present themselves to our view, namely;

God's love to his people, and

Their love to him;

both of which, may be called the *love of God*. Therefore let us attend—

I. To the love of God towards his people. This made its *first* appearance in the *covenant of grace*; in which the Father required of his Son as his *people's surety*, the *fulfilment of the law*, which he knew they *would break*; and that he should *suffer the penalty* thereof, on their account. To both of which, Christ said; lo, I come to do thy will, O God. Heb. x. 9. Now as this *covenant* is called an *everlasting covenant*, (Hag. ii. 3.) the love from whence it sprang must be everlasting also; agreeable to what the Lord says by the Prophet, I have loved thee with an *everlasting love*; (Jer. xxxi. 3.) which love is ever the same towards his people, as it fixed upon *their persons* without any regard whatsoever to their works done by them, either before, or after conversion. Accordingly we are told by the Prophet Zephaniah that *God will rest in his love*; (Zeph. iii. 17.) and that having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the *end*; John xiii. 1. that is to the end of their *lives*—to the end of *time*—

shall eternally. Now this love of which I am speaking, did not first commence at regeneration; but was towards the *persons* of his people before that time, for says the Apostle; God who is rich in mercy, for his *great love* wherewith he loved us, *even when we were DEAD IN SINS.* Eph. ii. 4, 5. From whence we may learn, that *regeneration* is not the *cause*, but the *effect* of God's love; for he having loved his people with an *everlasting love*; therefore it is, that with lovingkindness he *draws* them, in regeneration to himself.

Now this love, or favor, observe, God's people did not do any thing to *obtain*, for it was fixed upon them, before they had done either good or evil; (Rom. ix. 11.) nor can they do any thing, to *keep themselves in it*, or to *separate themselves from it*; for were that the case, they must be consumed; but he is the Lord and changes not, therefore the *stars of Jacob* are not *consumed*. Mal. iii. 6. Well then might the Apostle triumphantly say, who shall *separate us from the love of Christ*? shall tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword? nay, says the Apostle, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that *loved us*; for I am persuaded, that neither *death*, nor *life*, nor *angels*, nor *principalities*, nor *powers*, nor *things present*, nor *things to come*, nor *height*, nor *depth*, NOR ANY OTHER CREATURE, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in *Christ Jesus our Lord.* Rom. viii. 35, 37, 38, 39. At sometimes by the *love of God*, we are to understand,

2. His people's *love to him*, which the Apostle calls, a fruit of the spirit, saying; *the fruit of the spirit, is LOVE.* (Gal. v. 22.) Therefore *this love* experienced by none but those, on whom the *spirit* works by his almighty power. Accordingly,
when

when our Lord was addressing some of the Jews of old, he said unto them; but I know you, that you have not the *love of God in you*, (John v. 42.) which plainly proved them to be *carnal*, or *unregenerated* men. Now, we may observe here, that whenever *this love*, of which I am now speaking, is *experienced* by any of the Saints of God; it is the *effect* of that love, which God bore towards them before that time: Agreeable to which the Apostle John says; we *love him*, because he *first loved us*. 1 John iv. 19. From whence we may learn, that *God* is the *object* of the christian's love; and this is the love, I presume, of which the Apostle speaks in the words of my text.

I shall proceed therefore to shew,

II. What is implied in *keeping ourselves* in it.— Under which head we may observe, that inasmuch as the *fervor* of love may abate, and christians grow cold and indifferent in the expressions of it: It becomes them to make use of *every proper mean*, in order to *keep themselves* in it, that is, to maintain it, and increase it in themselves, as well as in *others*; for the words may be rendered, *keep one another* in the love of God.

Now the means to be made use of for these purposes, are mentioned in the context.—Such as *contending earnestly* for the (doctrine of) faith which was once delivered to the Saints: (verse 3d) *conversing* with each other in an edifying way, *encouraging* and *building up* each other on (the *object* of their most holy faith, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ). Another mean to be made use of, to increase *our love to God*, or to keep ourselves in the exercise of this love, is, *praying in*, (or under the influence of) *the Holy Ghost*, verse 20th, not only in public but in private; not only when we are together,

but also when we are separated from each other.—
And as prayer is a *mean* of keeping ourselves and
each other in the exercise of love to God ; so also
is looking (forward) for the *mercy* of our Lord Je-
sus Christ, *unto eternal life* ; which is, what the
mercy of God will issue in ; the belief of which,
will keep the christian in the *exercise* of love to his
God. Now these, together with

Reading the word,

Hearing the gospel, and

Attending its ordinances, &c.

may serve to revive our love to God, and blow it
up into a flame.

From hence then it appears, that this text, nei-
ther militates against the doctrine of *absolute election*,
nor yet countenances the doctrine of *falling from*
a state of grace, or *favor* with God.—And,

Admitting that by the *love of God*, his *grace*, or
favor were intended : the *exhortation* to Saints, to
keep themselves in it, can only mean, that the Apostle
wished them to make use of the above-mentioned
means, in order that they might be kept in the
possession of it, that they might be *supported*
in their *minds*, and not *carried away* by those un-
godly men, who are made mention of in the *fourth*
verse of this Epistle.

SERMON CXI.

Romans iii. 24.

*Being justified freely by his grace, through the re-
demption that is in Christ Jesus.*

IN the foregoing part of this chapter, answers are
given to several objections which follow one
another, relative to what the Apostle had said, con-
cerning

cerning the equality of the Gentiles with the Jews, and various proofs are produced out of the Psalms and Prophets, to shew the general depravity and corruption of both; from whence he concludes, that there is no justification before God, by the works of the law, for says he, by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh (neither Jew nor Gentile) be justified in his sight; but on the contrary, he tells us in the words of my text, that the way by which all God's people are justified in his sight, or before him is—by HIS grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

In speaking on these words, I shall shew,

- I. What *Justification* is,
- II. Take notice of the *Cause*,
- III. Of the *Matter*,
- IV. Of the *Persons*, and
- V. Shew when this *Act* took place.

First then, I am to shew what *Justification* is.

Under this head we may observe, that I have not to speak at this time of *justification before men* (James ii. 21.) nor have I to speak of *justification in the conscience of believers*, (Luke xviii. 14.) but of their *justification before God*, or in his sight, (Rom. iii. 20.) And here let it be remembered, that *justification* is not a work of grace within God's people, but an *act* of grace towards them, whereby pardons and accepts of them, in the righteousness of Christ, imputed to them; (Rom. iv. 6.) in which righteousness, they stand as innocent before God as though they had never sinned; for in this act God not only takes from them their filthy garments but also clothes them with change of raiment. In short, *justification* is a law term, and stands opposed in the word of God, to *condemnation*; so that

a person who is *justified* before God, is not *condemned* before him, and a person who is *condemned* before God, is not *justified* before him.

I shall proceed now,

II. To take notice of the *Cause*.—And here we may observe brethren, that the cause is not any thing *done* by the creature, neither *before* nor *after* conversion: nor is it any thing *wrought* in the creature, but my text tells us, that we are justified freely by *his* (God's) *grace*; by which term *grace*, we are not to understand the grace of God as a principle infused into the heart, (2 Peter iii. 18.) although that sanctifies God's people, and makes them meet for glory, (Col. i. 12.) it does not *justify* any of them *in his sight*; for *justification* remember, is *not* a work of grace in a man, but an *act* of grace towards him.

Therefore, by the term *grace* in this text, we are to understand God's LOVE AND FAVOR towards his people, (Eph. ii. 8.) which is the cause of this blessing of *justification*, as well as of every other *spiritual blessing*, which the christian enjoys in this world; or that he will enjoy in that which is to come. Accordingly it is said, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, *therefore* with lovingkindness have I drawn thee; (Jer. xxxi. 3.) in which passage, LOVE is represented as the *cause*, and drawing as the *effect* thereof; and as this love is both *sovereign* and *free*, therefore it is said in my text, that we are justified *FREELY* by *his* grace, so that there is nothing in God's people, or that is *done* by them, that has any influence upon him, to cause him to *justify* their *persons*; but he does it *freely* and *voluntarily*, from that *love* which he bears towards them; besides which, there is no other *cause* whatever to be found.

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But having taken notice of the *cause*, I shall proceed now,

III. To take notice of the *Matter* of justification, which my text tells us, is the *redemption that is in Christ Jesus*: which word *redemption*, includes the *whole matter* of a sinner's justification before God, for Christ both went to the end of the law for righteousness in his life, Rom. x. 4. as well as suffered its *penalty* in his *death*, in the room and stead of his people; John x. 28. and although it is said by the Apostle, in Rom. v. 9. that we are justified by his blood: the word BLOOD, is there put for the *whole matter* of justification, the *shedding* of which, was the *finishing* part thereof.

We are told also, in the Acts of the Apostles, that by him, (that is, Christ) all that believe are justified. Acts xiii. 39. But mark the expression brethren—BY HIM—that is, by what he *did* in his life, and by what he *suffered* in his death, as the *surety* of his people. So that the *whole matter* of a sinner's justification in God's sight, is the *righteousness of Christ*, consisting of his *active* and *passive* obedience, and *that only*.

From what has been said on this head, we may learn, that it requires more for a man's justification, than it does for his *pardon*; for the death of Christ alone would have been sufficient for *pardon*; but as pardon makes no man *righteous*, therefore it was, that Christ *went to the end of the law* for righteousness: Rom. x. 4. And therefore it is all that God the Father puts it to the account of his people. (Rom. iv. 6.) This is that righteousness in which the Saints of God in all ages of the world have made their *boast*, saying, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; Isa. xlv. 2. and for this reason it is, that the Prophet Jeremi-

calls Christ, the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Jer.
xviii. 6.

I come now to take notice,

IV. Of the *Persons* on whom this act passes—
under which head we may observe,

1. That the Apostle tells us, *all that believe* are justified from all things; (Acts xiii. 39) but then we must observe here, that although *all that believe* are justified, yet the *act of justification* did not pass *with God* on their believing; nor is there anything like it, either *said or implied*, in the above-mentioned text; for they were *actually*, though *secretly* justified before God in Christ's righteousness, *before they believed*; against which truth, there is nothing in the above-mentioned text to militate, for *believing* has no influence on our justification in *God's sight*, but is a *manifestation* of the *persons*, who are so justified—Therefore we may observe,

2. That the persons whom God justifies, are called the *UNGODLY*. Accordingly the Apostle tells us, that to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that *justifieth the ungodly*; his faith, (that is, the object thereof) is counted for righteousness. Rom. iv. 5. Now from this passage it is obvious, that *justification* is not an act of God's grace *towards a believer as such*; because every real believer is a *godly person*, and if God were not to justify his people till after they believe; then, instead of his justifying the *UNGODLY*, he must justify the *godly*; contrary to what the Apostle says, in the above-mentioned passage. But since it is certain from this passage, that he *justifieth the ungodly*, it is equally as certain also, that he must justify them *before they believe*: for believing has no more to do with our *justification before God*, than our hands have
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with the objects which they receive; and, as our hands do not *give existence* to, but *receive* the objects, even so our believing gives no existence to the *Act* of justification with God; but is the way in which we receive the *knowledge*, and enjoy the *comfort* thereof.—Again,

3. The persons whom God justifies, are called also the *ELECT*. Agreeable to which the Apostle says, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* Rom. viii. 33. And as nothing can be laid to their charge, (to condemn them before God) then all the *ELECT as such*, must be *justified* before him. Therefore says the Apostle in the first verse of the above-mentioned 8th chapter, there is no *condemnation* to them which are in Christ Jesus, and if so, then all that are *in Christ Jesus*, must be justified in God's sight. And it is in vain for any one to object here saying, that the Apostle is speaking of those, who *walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*; unless he can prove, that *such a walk* put them into Christ, which we are sure he cannot do; since their *holy walk* was the *effect*, and not the *cause* of their *union* to Christ.

But having taken notice of the *persons* whom God justifies—I proceed now,

V. To shew when this *Act* took place.—

And here brethren, we may observe,

1. That some affirm, that the act of justification does not take place *with God*, till his people are brought to believe in Christ; and this they might make appear, if they could prove that Christ's *righteousness* was not accepted of God on their account till they believe; but as this cannot be done, the idea of God's people *not being justified before him till they believe*, must be entirely given up.—Besides *justification before God* in the righteousness of Christ.

is one of those things, which the spirit takes and *shows* unto his people; (John xvi. 14.) and as the object must exist before the *eye* sees it, or the *hand* receives it; so also must *justification* as a blessing of grace, *exist with God*; before his people by the *eye of faith* can see it, or by the *hand of faith* receive it; and as the *eye*, or *hand*, gives no existence to the objects with which they are conversant; so neither does *faith* give existence to the *act of justification* with God; for that blessing must previously exist, before faith can receive it.

2. But others there are, who suppose that this *act* of justification took place with God, *when Christ rose from the dead*, and *not till then*; which idea is founded on the Apostle's words, where he says, Christ was delivered for our offences, and *raised again* for our justification: Rom. iv. 25. and this also might be proved, could it be made to appear, that the righteousness of Christ, (which is the *matter* of justification) was not accepted of God the Father on the behalf of his people, till that time; but this we know cannot be done, and therefore this idea also, of God's not justifying his people till *Christ rose from the dead*, must be laid aside; for if God accepted of Christ's righteousness on the behalf of his people before that time, then it must necessarily follow that they were *justified* before that time; for the matter of justification could not be accepted of God one moment, prior to the justification of those persons, on whose behalf it was accepted.

Besides, were this a truth, that God's people were not justified in *his sight* till Christ rose from the dead; then all that died *before that time*, must be gone to Hell, or else taken to Heaven in a state of *anathema*, neither of which can be admitted; therefore when the Apostle says, *he was raised again*

for our justification, it evidently means, for the *restitution* of it, for by this act, it fully appears, that sin is *atoned* for, and an everlasting righteousness brought in, and that both are accepted of God, on the behalf of his people.

Now, as this *act* of which I am speaking, was before *believing*, and before Christ's *resurrection*; so also I scruple not to say—

3. That *with God*, it was an *eternal act*.—This appears,

1. From the *suretyship* engagement of Christ in the covenant of grace; for says the Apostle, *Jesus* was made a *surety* of a better testament; Heb. vii. 22. in which *office*, he was set up from *everlasting*, from the beginning, or ever the earth was—and his delights were with the sons of men. Prov. viii. 23, 31.

Now Christ as his people's *surety*, engaged to pay their *debts*, to bear their sins, and to make satisfaction for them, and he was accepted as such, by God the Father; who thence forward looked at him for payment and satisfaction, and looked at them, as *discharged*; for as soon as Christ said, lo, I come to do thy will; O God, (Heb. x. 9.) which was to fulfil the law, and suffer its penalty for his people; the Father accepted of that promise, which was the *bond*, (if I may so speak) upon which all his people were acquitted; and as the covenant of grace is called an *everlasting covenant*, Isa. lv. 3. this acquittance must be an *everlasting acquittance* or freedom from condemnation in his sight. Thus we find, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, (which was accomplished by not imputing their trespasses to them. 2 Cor. v. 19.)

From hence then we may learn, that it was never the design of God, to put a single sin to the account

of his people, but to charge them all upon *Christ* their surety; (Isai. liii. 6.) and impute his righteousness to them, for their justification *before him*; therefore says the Apostle, blessed is the man, to whom the Lord will not *impute sin*, Rom. iv. 8. and blessed is the man also, unto whom God *imputes righteousness* without works. Rom. iv. 6.—But, This doctrine of eternal justification in God's sight, may be proved also,

2. From the *matter thereof*, namely, the *righteousness* of Christ, which is called in God's word, an *everlasting righteousness*. Accordingly the Prophet Daniel says, *seventy weeks* are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city; to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in *everlasting righteousness*. Now this righteousness may be called an *everlasting righteousness*; because God the Father *everlastingly* required it in the covenant of grace, and God the Son *everlastingly* promised to work it out; it may be called moreover, *everlasting righteousness*, because when once imputed to God's people, (as it was in the covenant of grace) it *for ever* remains so; for the *gifts*, (as well as the calling) of God, are without repentance; Rom. xi. 29. now seeing that the *matter* of justification is *everlasting*, as Daniel says it is; so must the justification which follows upon it, be *everlasting* also.

Hence it is, that all God's people under the *old dispensation*, were justified in Christ's righteousness before God, as well as those under the *gospel dispensation*; for Christ having promised in the covenant of grace, to work it out, (Heb. x. 9.) the Father accepted of it, and *imputed* it to all his people in Christ; in which they stand *complete* before him, agreeable to the words of the Apostle, *ye are complete in him*. Col. ii. 10.

But

But again, that this act of God towards his people must be an *everlasting one*, appears also—

3. From the *persons on whom it passes*, which are *all the elect of God*. That this is a truth, is evident from the Apostle's words, where he says, who shall lay any thing to the charge of *God's elect*? it is God that justifies, (Rom. viii. 33.) that is to say, *the elect*. Now, as all the *elect of God* are justified in his sight; we have nothing to do but to prove that *election* is an *eternal act*, and then we prove that *justification* must be *eternal* also. Now this *election* is an *eternal act*, is obvious from the Apostle's words, where he says, he hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. and since God chose his people in Christ, before the foundation of the world; and nothing can be laid to the charge of these chosen, or *elect* ones; it necessarily follows, that they must be justified before the foundation of the world, when they were chosen in Christ, or elected of God; for says the Apostle, there is no *condemnation* to them that are in *Christ Jesus*; Rom. viii. 1. therefore as soon as they were chosen in Christ Jesus, they were justified before God in Christ's righteousness, which he promised to work out; and whoever contends for the doctrine of *eternal election*, and denies the doctrine of *eternal justification*, is inconsistent with himself, as well as with the word of God.

But having thus proved the doctrine, I shall now proceed to answer—

SOME OBJECTIONS made against it.—

And here we may observe,

1. "That it is objected by some, that men could not be justified from eternity, because they did not exist from eternity." But then, what there is in this objection lies as strongly against the doctrine of *eternal election*, as it does against *eternal justification*.

ing; for if God could not *eternally justify* his people because they did not *eternally exist*; then it evidently follows, that he could not *eternally elect* them for the same reason; and yet the Apostle says, he hath chosen us in him, *before the foundation of the world*; and if God could chuse his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, (which was long before they actually existed) he could justify them as early, since *justification is not a work of grace within them, but an act of grace towards them, as election is*; and that man who denies the doctrine of *eternal justification*, (to be consistent with himself) ought also to deny *eternal election*, since they must both stand or fall together.

2. But there are some who object to the doctrine of *eternal justification*, because say they, "if men be *eternally justified*, they must be justified before sin was committed, which is absurd:" to which I reply, that it is no more absurd to say, that God's elect were justified from their sins before they were committed, then it is to say, they were imputed to Christ, and he died for them before they were committed; which must absolutely be the case with all those of his people, who *have lived*, since Christ suffered upon the cross; for if their sins were not imputed to Christ, then it follows, that Christ did not die for them; and if Christ did not die for them, they bare the *charge* of their own sins, and must be *punished in Hell*, on account thereof.— Those therefore that believe the doctrine of the *imputation* of sin to Christ, ought never to make this objection; but if they do, they should remember that the *elect* were considered as *sinners*, in the covenant transactions between the Father and the Son; or else how came Christ to be *surety* for them in that covenant? or how otherwise could there be a *transfer* of the *charge* from them to Christ,

Christ, as the Apostle speaks in 2 Cor. v. 19. and the Prophet in Isaiah liii. 6. in the former passage we are told, that God was in Christ reconciling the *world* (that is his own people) to himself, *not imputing their trespasses to them*; and the latter informs us, that he caused them to meet upon Christ.

From hence then it appears, that God viewed his people as *sinners*, even before the choice was made; agreeable to which idea, the Apostle says, God hath from the *beginning* chosen you to *salvation*; and if so, he must have viewed them as *fallen creatures* before the choice was made, or it could not have been to *salvation*, as the Apostle says it was.—But,

3. Some there are who object to this doctrine of *eternal justification*; because say they, “if the *elect* were justified *from eternity*, they never could fall, nor be in a lost state;” whereas, God’s chusing them in Christ to *salvation* implies, that he viewed them in that state, (in Adam) before the choice was made: for all things past, present and to come, are *naked and open* unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Heb. iv. 13. And be it remembered here, that he did not chuse his people in Christ, to prevent their falling *by sin*; but to prevent the charge of sin coming against them, and their falling into Hell on account thereof, which they can never do, because Christ has taken both the *charge* and the *punishment* upon himself, as appears from Isaiah liii. 5, 6.—But again,

4. Some there are, who object to the doctrine of *eternal justification*, because “justification is spoken of, as *something to be done in future*;” as for instance, where the Prophet says; in the Lord, shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glorify. Mai. xiv. 25. In answer to which we may say,

serve, that whenever *justification* is spoken of in God's word as something to be done in future, it never *relates* to a sinner's justification *before* God, for that is an act of his grace, which passed on all the elect in the covenant of grace, in consideration of the righteousness of Christ, as already proved; but it always refers to the *manifestation* of that act, to the souls of God's people after regeneration, when they are brought to believe in Christ, with the heart unto righteousness; at which time, they become justified, or freed from condemnation in their own consciences, and *can* glory, saying; in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. *Isai. lxxv. 24.*

But some perhaps may say, "is it not said of the *publican*, that he went down (from the temple) to his own house justified? *Luke xviii. 14.* and does not that imply, that he went up to the temple *condemned?*" to which I answer, *it does*; but not that he went up to the temple condemned *before* God, for as one of God's elect, he was justified in Christ's righteousness imputed to him, even before he went up to the temple, though not justified or freed from condemnation *in his conscience*, till while he was there; and this is the sense, in which the *publican went down* to his own house justified.

But;
5. Others there are, who object to the doctrine of *eternal justification* by saying, "they believe that God's people are justified *in his purpose* from eternity, but not *actually* justified, till they *believe*; for he that believeth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him. *John iii. 18.*

6. Now with regard to the former part of this object, that is to say; that "God's people are justified *in his purpose*;" there is not a single passage in the word of God, to support the idea,
if

If we speak of the *Act* itself. It is said indeed by the Apostle, that God's people are *called* according to his purpose; Rom. viii. 28. but it is no where said, that they are justified before him in Christ's righteousness from eternity, *according to his purpose*; and therefore the idea ought to be rejected by all lovers of truth, as *antiscritural*; and as I have before observed, whenever justification is spoken of as done *in time*, it is not to be understood of the *act itself*, but of the *manifestation* of that act to the souls of believers; at which time they become *justified*, or freed from condemnation in their own consciences.

Now, to say that God's people are *called according to his purpose*, is saying right, because in calling a work of grace is wrought *in the person*, and consequently requires the *actual existence* of that person, before that work can be wrought in him; but justification *being* an act of grace *towards* all the *elect* as such; it no more required their *actual existence*, than election did, for it was quite sufficient with God, that they should exist in some future period of time; and that Christ their *saviour* had engaged to do, and to suffer all that *law* and *justice* could require of them.

But let us attend now, to the words which are brought to support the objection; which are, "he that believeth not, is *condemned already*; and the *wrath of God* abideth on him." That is, (to give these words the meaning which the objectors will have them to have) he that believeth not, (now) is *condemned already* (before God) and the *wrath of God* abideth on him; *because* he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. —

Now, if this be the meaning of the words, namely, that God's *elect* are *condemned* before him, and the *wrath of God* abideth on them, then it follows

that *all their sins* must be charged to them, for where there is no sin charged, there can be no condemnation. But this would contradict both the *Prophet* and the *Apostle*; the *former* says, the Lord hath laid on *Christ* the iniquity of us all, *Isai. liii. 6.* and the *latter* tells us, that God was in *Christ*, reconciling the world unto himself, *not imputing* their trespasses to them. *2 Cor. v. 19.* Now, if the sins of the *elect* were all laid upon *Christ*, then it necessarily follows, that they (the *elect*) must be free from the charge thereof; therefore says the *Apostle*, who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's *elect*? *Rom. viii. 33.* who added? when all their sins are put to the account of *Christ* their surety.

But if we suppose that the *elect* are condemned before God, and that the *wrath of God* abideth on them till they believe; what follows in consequence thereof? but that either *Christ* hath not made atonement for his people's sins, or if made, yet the Father hath not accepted of it on their account; and notwithstanding all the sufferings which *Christ* endured, as his people's surety; yet while in unbelief, they are condemned before God, and the *wrath of God* abideth on them; and by thus reasoning, the whole of the atonement of *Christ* is overturned, and the righteousness which he wrought out, is rendered void, for if the *elect* be condemned before God, and under his wrath before they believe, they must remain so after they have believed, unless we can suppose that believing works out a righteousness for them, and makes an atonement to God for their sins, which we are sure it cannot do, for believing, is as much an act of the creature, as praying is; and such, is a work; and the *Apostle* says, *not of works*, lest any man should boast. *Eph. ii. 8.*

From what has been said then, we may learn:

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that

that the passages on which I have been speaking, cannot refer to the *condemnation of God's elect* before him; but to the condemnation of the *non-elect*, who are described by their *final unbelief*, as they are also in Mark xvi. 16. where Christ says, he that believeth not shall be damned; but then, by the words, *he that believeth not*, we cannot understand our Lord to mean, he that believeth not *now*, shall be damned; since some who were then in a state of unbelief might afterwards believe in him, and manifest thereby that they are delivered from the wrath spoken of in the above passages: but by the words *he that believeth not*; we are to understand one that *lives and dies* in a state of unbelief; for he is, who is *condemned already*, and on whom the *wrath of God abides*, in consequence of his sins, which are *justly* left charged to his own account; for Christ was under no obligation to die, or to endure *God's wrath* for the sins of *any*, had it not been his sovereign will and pleasure so to do.—But

6. This doctrine of *eternal justification* is objected to by some, because the Apostle speaks of "*justification by faith*," saying therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. Rom. iii. 28. But in answer to this objection, we may observe, that sometimes by the term *faith*, we are to understand the *object* of faith, namely, Christ, as in Galatians iii. 25. where it is said, after that *faith* is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster; and if we understand this to be the meaning of the term *faith*, in the above-mentioned passage in Romans, then it means, that we are justified in God's sight (verse 20.) by Christ, that is, by what Christ *did* in his life, and *suffered* in his death, as our surety.

Again, sometimes by the term *faith*, we are to understand a *principle of grace* in the heart; and as such, it is the produce of God the Spirit.

According

Accordingly we find, that the Apostle speaks of the *faith* of the *operation* of God. Col. ii. 12. But then, it would sound extremely odd for a man to say, I am justified before God by the work of the spirit in my heart; for that would be making *sanctification* the *matter* of his justification before God, instead of the *righteousness* of Christ; therefore whenever *justification by faith* is spoken of, (unless by the term *faith* Christ be meant) we are not to understand *justification before* God; but justification or freedom from condemnation in the *believer's conscience*; agreeable to the words of the Apostle where he says, therefore being *justified by faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; Rom. v. 1. so that though the elect are *justified before God*, in Christ's righteousness *from eternity*; they are not justified in their *own consciences*, till they believe in Christ; at which time, they enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; and though *faith* does not enter into the *matter* of a man's justification before God, yet it is that by which he receives the knowledge and enjoyment thereof.

7. But some perhaps may object against the doctrine of *eternal justification*; "because the Apostle places *justification after calling*, saying, whom he called, them he also *justified*, and whom he justified, them he also *glorified*; (Rom. viii. 30.) and we may as well say, that we were eternally *sanctified and glorified*, as to say we were eternally *justified*." In answer to this objection we may observe, that the order of words in scripture, does not always express the order of things; for even the order of the persons in the *Trinity*, is not always kept to; sometimes the Son is placed before the Father, and at other times the holy Spirit is placed before them both. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. 2 Thes. iii. 5. so also

with respect to *calling*, it is sometimes placed before *election*; as where the Apostle says, make your calling and election sure; but surely none will conclude from hence, that men are not *elected* till after they are *called*; because we are told to the contrary in Eph. i. 4. as we are also, in the *first* verse of the Epistle of St. Jude.

But even supposing we keep to the *order of the words*, there will then be no difficulty attending it, for though a man is justified *before God*, in Christ's righteousness, *before calling*; (because he was justified when he was elected) yet he is not justified, or freed from condemnation in his own conscience, till after he is called, and brought to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore in this sense it may be said, whom he *calls*, them he also *justifies*.

But let us attend now, to the other part of the objection, namely, "we may as well say, that we were eternally *sanctified* and *glorified*, as to say we were eternally *justified*." In reply to which we may observe, that this part of the objection, (itself as it is) arises, I presume, from a mistaken notion of what justification is, for the objector supposes it to be a *work of grace* in the heart of a sinner, instead of an *act of grace* towards him. But he should remember, that although both *sanctification* and *glorification*, require the *actual existence* of the object, yet justification does not, that being an *act of God's will*, not to impute sin to his people, but to impute Christ's righteousness to them, *before* their justification *before him*.—But again,

8. Some there are who object to the doctrine of *eternal justification*, "because they cannot find it in so many syllables and words together, in the word of God." But this is extremely weak indeed, because upon this plan, many very important truths

must be given up, although they are clearly revealed in the word of God.—But to shew the absurdity of this objection, two or three examples, I think, will be sufficient. For were I to object against a doctrine, because I cannot find it in so many *syllables* and *words*, I must upon this plan, give up the doctrine of *eternal election* so called, for where can I find in the word of God *eternal election*, in so many *syllables* and *words* together? I find indeed what amounts thereto, where the Apostle says, he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; Eph. i. 4. and this is quite sufficient to satisfy my mind, relative to the doctrine of *eternal election*, whether it will satisfy the mind of the objector or not.—Again,

Were I to object against a doctrine, because I cannot find it in so many *syllables* and *words*, I must then give up, what is commonly called the doctrine of the *imputed righteousness of Christ*; for I cannot find it in so many *syllables* and *words* connected together in the Bible. I can find indeed what amounts thereto; for David describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God *imputeth righteousness* without works; Rom. iv. 6. and this satisfies my mind relative to the above-mentioned doctrine, as well as though I had found it expressed in so many *syllables* and *words*, because I am sure that none but *Christ's righteousness* can be intended in the above-mentioned text, for he is expressly called, *the Lord our righteousness*; Jer. xiii. 6. whose righteousness it is, that is declared in God's word, for the *remission of sins*. Rom. iii. 25. We may observe again, that it is no where said in so many *syllables* and *words*, that *sin was imputed to Christ*; but it is said, that iniquity was laid on him, (Isai. liii. 6.) and also, that he bare our sins in his own body on the tree, 1 Pet. ii. 24.

which he could not have done, had they not been imputed to him.

But notwithstanding all that has been said on the subject, some perhaps may say, "supposing that *eternal justification* be a truth; what good can it do, if it be preached?" to which I reply; as much good as any other truth, which is contained in God's word. Beside, if *eternal justification* be a truth, as I have already proved it is, how then can those ministers declare the *whole counsel* of God, as Paul did; (Acts xx. 27.) while they leave out one of the most important truths contained in all the Bible; and a truth on which, Paul strongly insisted, as appears from Romans viii. 1. 33. and as to the *good* or *harm* that the preaching of this, or any other truth contained in the Bible, is likely to do, we have no business with, for that ought to be left with him, who hath said to his ministers, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Matt. xxviii. 20.

But again, that preaching the doctrine of *eternal justification*, in the imputed righteousness of Christ, is likely to do much good, appears also, from its *establishing the atonement* of Christ, while the contrary doctrine overturns it.—For if God's will, &c. such, are condemned in his sight; it plainly proves that sin is charged to them, for where there is sin, there can be no condemnation: and if sin be charged to God's people, then Christ hath not taken it upon himself, or if he took it, he did not bare the *punishment* thereof, or the *wrath* due thereto: nor so, they could not be *condemned* before God, nor could his *wrath* abide upon them, as some affirm, does, till they believe; for wherein appears the *justice* of God, to keep a *debt charged* to my account, which my *surety* has paid for me?

And as by denying this doctrine of *eternal justification*

fection the *atonement* is overturned; so also, *salvation by works is established thereby*.—For if my sins be charged to my account, and I am condemned, and under the wrath of God, notwithstanding what Christ hath done and suffered; I ask then, what must I do, in order to remove sin and to turn away *God's wrath* from me? to which question (in all probability) the following answer will be given, namely, *believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*. But will my believing (which is a work) put away sin from before God, and turn away his wrath from me? if it will, then salvation is of works, contrary to what Paul says, not of works lest any man should boast. Eph. ii. 9. But be it remembered brethren, that if my sins were charged before God, and his *wrath* upon me, *before I believed*, they must remain so; for believing makes no *atonement*, though, it is in a way of believing, that we *receive the atonement*. In short, if the doctrine for which I have been contending be denied, the whole *gospel plan* is frustrated; and no *salvation* can be enjoyed by any of the sons of men; therefore instead of preaching *glad tidings of salvation* to them, we have nothing to preach (upon this plan) but *bad tidings of damnation*; for if the *elect* be condemned before God, and if the *wrath* of God abide upon them, after all that Christ hath done and suffered for them; they must for ever remain condemned, and endure that *wrath*, which their sins have deserved.

S E R M O N CXII.

Psalm cxxviii. 22, 23,

The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head of the corner ;—this is the Lord's doing ; it is marvellous in our eyes.

THIS psalm begins with an exhortation to praise God for his *mercies*, which we are told, endure for ever.—The psalmist then shews, that it is good to put our trust in God, yea, that it is better to trust in him, than to put confidence even in *princes*.—We have then the coming of Christ's kingdom typified, and the words of my text introduced, namely, the *stone*, which the *builders* refused, is become the head of the corner ;—this is the Lord's doing ; it is marvellous in our eyes.

In speaking on these words, I shall,

- I. Take notice of this *Stone*, and
- II. Of *What* is said concerning it.

First then, I am to take notice of *this stone* ;—by which, Christ is undoubtedly intended, as is obvious, from the application of this passage to him in Matthew xxi. 42. as it is also, from the use which the *Apostle* makes use of it, in Acts iv. 11, 12.—Now Christ in scripture, is often compared to a stone, he is called

The stone of *Israel*, Gen. xlix. 24.

A stone of *stumbling*, Isai. viii. 14.

A precious *corner-stone*, Isai. xxviii. 16.

A *stone* cut out of the mountain, Dan ii. 34.

A *living* stone, 1 Peter ii. 4. and

A *stone* with *seven* eyes. Zech. iii. 9.

And Christ may be compared to a stone,

1. *For its strength.* Accordingly it is said in the book of Psalms; let thy hand be upon the *man* of thy right hand, upon the *son of man*, whom thou madest *strong* for thyself: Psal. lxxx. 17. And in another place, the psalmist breaks out, saying, O Lord God of hosts, who is a *strong Lord* like unto thee? Psal. lxxxix. 8.

But again, as Christ may be compared to a stone for strength; so also,

2. He may be compared to a stone, for its *durability*. Agreeable to which idea, the Apostle when speaking of him, says, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Heb. xiii. 8. These are hallowed words indeed; words, which are replete with *comfort* and *consolation*, for the support of all God's children, for they have nothing to do, but to look back and to see what Jesus was to them *yesterday*, or in some *past time*; and whatever it was, he is true to them *to-day*, and *will be* for evermore; for with him there is no *variableness*, nor *shadow* of turning. James i. 17.—But,

3. Christ may be compared to a *stone* likewise, for his *usefulness* in the foundation of buildings. Agreeable to which it is said by the Lord himself, Behold! I lay in Zion for a *foundation*, a *stone*, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a *sure foundation*. Isai. xxviii. 16. Mark christian, this stone which God hath laid for a foundation, is called a *tried stone*; it has been

Tried by his *Father*,

Tried by *Satan*, and

Tried by his *people*

in every age of the world, who have found him a *precious stone*, (1 Peter ii. 7.) as well as a *sure foundation*. Well therefore may it be said, that he that believeth on him, shall not be *confounded*;

founded; that is, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.

But this stone, namely, Christ; is called also by the Apostle Peter, a *living stone*, because he contains life in himself, John i. 4. and communicates life, both *spiritual* and *eternal*, to the souls of his people. Therefore, says the Apostle, to whom coming as unto a *living stone*;—ye also as lively stones, are built up a *spiritual house*. 1 Peter ii. 4, 5.

But having taken notice of this stone; I proceed now to take notice

II. Of what is said concerning it. And we are told—

1. That the *builders* refused it. Now by the *builders*, we are to understand the *Jewish rulers* both *political* and *ecclesiastical*; but especially the latter. And that all ministers may be compared to *builders*, is very evident from the words of the Apostle, who calls himself by that name, saying, according to the grace of God, which is given unto me; as a *wise master builder*, I have laid the foundation. 1 Cor. iii. 10.

But these builders (we are told) *refused* this stone; that is,

They refused him as the *Messiah*,

They refused to *believe* in him,

They refused to *honor* him,

They refused his *doctrines*,

They refused to *preach* him, and

They refused to make *use* of him

in the *spiritual* building; and built the people on their *carnal privileges*, the *traditions* of the *elders* and their own *legal righteousness*; as do many *builders* (so called) in this our day; and in short, the *builders* who deny the *imputed righteousness* of Christ, and his *complete atonement* as available for the

na of all his people; together with all those who deny his *divinity*; may be said to *refuse* this stone, of which I have been speaking. But oh! how truly *awful* must the state and condition of those builders be, who refuse to build upon that foundation, which God himself hath laid in Zion; since, other foundation can no man lay (for saving purposes) than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. iii. 11;—But we may observe moreover,

2. That although the builders, many of them have refused, and do still refuse this stone; yet the stone is become the *head of the corner*.

Now we may observe here, that a *corner-stone* is that which unites the building together, to which Christ may well be compared, because he it is, that unites together *his people* among the Jews, with those among the Gentiles, he unites the old Testament Saints, with the new Testament Saints; and the Saints below, are by him united to those which are above. But a *corner-stone*, is that which adds *strength* to, and *beautifies* the building: both of which ideas, well apply to the Lord Jesus Christ, in this character; for as it is he that holds the building together; so also it is he, that adds *strength* and *lustre* to the various stones which compose it. Ezek. xvi. 14.—And we are told also,

3. That this is the *Lord's doing*; not the Lord's doing observe, that Christ is *rejected* by these builders, for that is owing to the *pride*, and *vitiosity* of their nature; but it is of the *Lord's doing*, that this stone is found; Job xxxiii. 24. it is of the Lord's doing that it was laid as a foundation, for men to build their hopes upon; Itai. xxviii. 16. and it is the Lord's doing also, that he is appointed the chief corner-stone, to strengthen and beautify the building.—But we are told moreover,

4. It is *marvellous* or wonderful in our eyes; that

that is, in the eyes of all the *Saints of God*.—The stone itself is a *marvellous* or wonderful one.—It is *wonderful* that the Lord should appoint this stone for a foundation.—It is *marvellous* or wonderful that we should be built upon it, and supported by it.—It is owing to *marvellous power*, that we are not thrown off from this foundation stone; and there is in all this, such a display of the wisdom, grace, mercy, and faithfulness of God, as is *marvellous* in our eyes.

SERMON CXIII.

I Timothy i. 8.

But we know that the law is good; if a man use it lawfully.

IN the preceding part of this chapter, Paul, after the inscription and salutation, exhorts Timothy to abide at *Ephesus*, in order that he might check the false teachers, who were there making inroads upon the people. The Apostle then informs him, that the end of the commandment of law, is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. After which, he describes the *persons* whom he suspected of teaching false doctrines; as having departed from the above mentioned things, unto *vain jangling*; desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm; but, (says the Apostle) *we know that the law is good; if a man use it lawfully.*

In speaking on the words of my text, I shall

- I. Take notice of this *Law*,
- II. Of its *Property*, and
- III. Of its *lawful Use*.

First then, I am to take notice of this *Law*, which is mentioned in my text.

1. Sometimes by the term *law*, the whole word of God is intended. This I presume is the meaning of the word, where David, when describing the good man, says; but his delight is in the *law* of his God, and in his *law* doth he meditate day and night; Psal. i. 2. and in doing which he found it sweeter to his taste, than honey to his mouth. Psal. cxix. 103.—But

2. At other times by the term *law*, we are to understand the *ceremonial law*. This appears from the Apostle's words, where, when speaking of Christ, he says; having *abolished* in his flesh the *enmity*, even the *law of commandments* contained in *ordinances*. Eph. ii. 15. But, as we are expressly told in the above-mentioned text, that Christ hath *abolished*, or destroyed this law; no more needs be said about it.—

Therefore let us proceed to observe,

3. That sometimes by the term *law*, the *gospel* is intended; as for instance, where the Prophet says, *The isles shall wait for thy law*, (Isai. xlii. 4.) that is, for thy *gospel*.—And we may observe,

4. That at other times, by this term *law*, we are to understand the *moral law*, or *ten commandments* so called. This I presume is the meaning of the word as it occurs in John's gospel, where it is said, *the law was given by Moses*, John i. 17. that God delivered it to him, (Exod. xx. 1.) and he delivered it to the people. And that this is the

meaning of the term *law* in my text, now under consideration, is, (I suppose) doubted by none, who are acquainted with the bible.

I shall therefore proceed now,

II. To take notice of its *Property*; we are told in my text, *it is good*; and the Apostle tells us in another place, that it is *holy, just and good*. Rom. vii. 12.

1. It is *holy*; it comes from an *holy* God, from whom nothing unholy can proceed; for he is *holy* in his nature, and *holy* in all his works; the matter of it also is *holy*, and it directs to holiness of life and conversation.—But,

2. It is *just*, as well as *holy*; there are no laws to *righteous*, as are the laws of God, for the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. Psal. xix. 9. This law of which I am speaking, requires the same of one, as it does of another, and renders to every man according to his works. It is *just* in condemning the wicked for their sins, and in justifying those, who have a righteousness to answer its requirements, which none have, but those who have the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. Rom. iv. 6.—And we are informed also,

3. That it is *good*. It is good as to the author of it, who is good *essentially* and *originally*: in which sense there is none good but one, and that is God, (Man. xix. 17.) from whom alone, every good and perfect gift comes. James i. 17.

It is good also, as to the matter of it, inasmuch as it points out our duty, both to God and to our neighbour: it sets forth the good which we ought to do, as well as the evil which we ought to avoid.

It is good in the design of it; which is to set forth the moral perfections of God; for if the law

which God hath given, be *holy, just and good*; as the Apostle says it is; then it necessarily follows, that the God who gave it, must be holy, just and good also.—And the law may be said to be *good* likewise, because it prohibits nothing but what is *hurtful* to the sons of men, that is to say, hurtful to their *bodies*, and hurtful to their immortal *souls*.—But having taken notice of this law, and its property mentioned in my text—I come now,

III. To take notice of its *lawful Use*. For says my text, the law is *good, if a man use it lawfully*; from these words we may observe, that this law is *in use*, and therefore not *destroyed*; agreeable to which, our Lord says, think not that I am come to destroy the law and the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. Matt. v. 17.

But then as this law is to be used, it ought to be used *lawfully*; which implies, that it is sometimes used *unlawfully*; as it is, when men are seeking for justification by the *deeds* thereof, for we are expressly told, that by the *deeds* of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his, (that is, in God's) sight. Rom. iii. 20.—But,

The law is used *unlawfully* also by those, who expect to gain eternal life by their *obedience* thereto, for eternal life is the *gift of God*, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. vi. 23.

It is used *unlawfully* likewise, when men are seeking for *peace of conscience* by their obedience to it; for the Apostle says, we have all joy and peace in *believing*; Rom. xv. 13. and if we have all joy and peace in believing, we can have none from our obedience, therefore that peace, which a man obtains from his own obedience, may be denominated *false and delusive*.—And,

It is equally *unlawful* also, for a man to make use

of it, either for his *present* or *future* acceptance with God; for the Apostle says, we are accepted in the *beloved*; Eph. i. 6. and whosoever obey the law, for any of the above-mentioned purposes, they use it *unlawfully*, dishonor God thereby, and deceive their own souls.

But having taken notice of the *unlawful* use of this law, let us attend now to its *lawful* use, and here we may observe,

1. That it is *lawful* to make use of the law, in order to *convince of sin*, for says the Apostle, by the law is the *knowledge of sin*; Rom. iii. 20, and again, I had not known sin, but by the law; Rom. vii. 7. for it is *this law*, which the spirit of God uses in *convincing* the sinner; and this he does, by holding it up to his mind, which is *previously enlightened*, unfolding to him its *spirituality*, by which he is led to see *sin*, to be exceeding *filial*; it *charges* him with it, brings *evidence* of it, and *condemns* for it; and its sentence must be executed, where the *righteousness* of Christ is not *imputed*. Well therefore might the Apostle say, blessed is the man unto whom God *imputeth righteousness*. Rom. iv. 6 — But,

2. It is *lawful* also, to use the law as a *workman* does his rule, in order to discover the *deformity* of his *work*, which the rule will do, although it will afford him no assistance in mending it.

Again,

3. It is *lawful* moreover, to use the law, as a *looking glass*, in which we may discover (by the light of the spirit) what manner of men we are, how *carnal*, how *corrupt*, and how far we are from that *perfection*, which God in his law requires, by which means, we shall be led to prize the *righteousness* of Christ, and desire with Paul to be found in him, not having on our own righteousness. Phil. iii. 9.

But *WIS*, who *went to the end of the law for righteousness*, to every one that believeth. This I presume is the use which every *believer* may make of the law, and yet use it *lawfully*, and being thus used, the law may be called *good*, as the Apostle has expressed it.

But some perhaps may say, that "*believers* are delivered from the law, (Rom. vii. 6.) and that they have nothing to do with it;" but this mistake, I presume, arises from want of due consideration: for if we take notice of the Apostle's reasoning we shall find, that the *deliverance* of which he speaks, in the above-mentioned passage, is brought about by the *body of Christ*; (verse 4th) that is, by what he *suffered* in his body; from whence it is evident to me, that the *deliverance* spoken of must be a deliverance from the *curse* of the law; and this is no more than what the Apostle has elsewhere said; for (says he) Christ hath redeemed us from the *curse of the law*, being made a *curse* for us. Gal. iii. 13. Again, that *believers* are not delivered from the *observance* of it, is evident I think, from our Lord's own words, where he says, when addressing the multitude and *his Disciples*; the *Scribes* and the *Pharisees* sit in Moses's seat, (that is, they were *teachers of the law of Moses*) *all*, therefore, *whatsoever* they bid you observe, that *observe* and *do*. Matt. xxiii. 3. Now, it cannot be supposed, I think, that our Lord would have thus recommended to his own *Disciples* the *observance* of a law, from which they were in *every sense* delivered, and with which they had nothing to do.

Besides, if *believers* are under no obligation to *observe* the law of God, then it follows, that *believers* cannot sin; for where there is *no law*, there is *no transgression*, Rom. iv. 15. for *sin* is the *transgression* of the law. 1 John iii. 4. Therefore if a

believer can be brought to acknowledge that he sins against God, and if the Apostle's definition of sin be right, when he says, it is the transgression of the law; then the believer must acknowledge, that he is not in *every sense* delivered from the law, but that he is bound to the *observance* of it, according to our Lord's direction in Matthew xxiii. 3. not bound to observe it, to work out a *justifying* righteousness, but from a *principle of love to Christ*, the law-fulfiller: and whenever the believer breaks this law, he sins against God, for sin is the transgression thereof; but it is his mercy, that Christ hath borne his sin in his own body on the tree, and delivered him from the curse of the law, being made a curse for him.

SERMON CXIV.

Luke xiii. 7, 8, 9.

—Cut it down: why cumbereth it the ground? and he answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit well, and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

THIS chapter begins with informing us of some that were present, who told Christ of the *Galileans*, whose blood *Pilate* had mingled with their sacrifices, on which they concluded, that these *Galileans* were sinners above all the other *Galileans*; and, that the *eighteen* upon whom the tower in *Silloom* fell, and slew them, were *sinners* above all men that dwelt in *Jerusalem*; but says Christ, I tell you nay; but, except ye *repent*, (that is, of your *rejecting* me as the *Messiah*) ye shall all likewise perish.

perish in like manner, by some judgment or other, which will befall you. Our Lord then introduces the following *parable*, saying, a *certain man* had a *fig-tree* planted in his *vineyard*; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he to the *dresser* of his *vineyard*; behold; these *three years* I come seeking fruit on this *fig-tree*, and find none, cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? and he answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

In discoursing on the words of my text, I shall shew

- I. What we are to understand by the word *IT*,
- II. Take notice of the *Owner's Direction*, and
- III. Of the *Dresser's Plea and Proposal*.

First then, I am to shew what we are to understand by the word *IT*.—But before I enter immediately upon this head, it may not be improper to inform you, that by the *certain man* spoken of in this parable, God the *Father* may be intended; for says Christ, *I am the vine, and my Father the husbandman*. By the *vineyard* in this parable, the *Church militant* is to be understood, which is called by that name, where it is said, my well-beloved hath a *vineyard*, in a very fruitful hill. *Isai. v. 1.*

But having premised thus much, I shall proceed now to the explanation of the word *IT*, which word, evidently alludes to the *fig-tree*, mentioned in the preceding part of this parable, and primarily relates to the unbelieving Jews, but *emblematically* sets forth those, with a *profession of religion only*.

Now,

1. This *fig-tree* is said to be planted in God's *Church*,

Church, or vineyard ; that is, it was planted by the *minister* thereof ; agreeable to the language of the Apostle, where he says, I have *planted*, Apollus *watered*. 1 Cor. iii. 6. But although *ministers* may *plant*, yet ministers cannot make those, who are planted by them, become *fruitful* ; as will all those who are planted by the Lord himself ; and every plant (says Christ) which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up : (Matt. xv. 13.) which words apply not only to every *doctrine*, which is contrary to the *word of God*, but also to every *man*, who is planted in the Church of God, and yet destitute of the *spirit* and *grace* of God.—But,

2. This *fig-tree* is said to be *barren*, for behold, (says Christ) these *three years* I come seeking *fruit* on this *fig-tree* and find none. Perhaps the *three years* may allude to the three years of Christ's ministry, or rather to the nature of the *fig-tree* itself, which (if it be good) bears fruit the *third-year*.

And this will be the case with every one, who is destitute of the *grace* of God ; for while he remains in a state of nature, were he in connexion with the people of God for *three thousand years*, he would not become fruitful ; for says Christ, from me, (not from my Church) is thy fruit found ; (Hosea xiv. 8.) therefore without *union* to, and *communication* from Christ, although there may be large leaves of profession, yet there will be no *fruit* brought forth to the praise and glory of God.

But I shall proceed now,

II. To take notice of the *Owner's Direction*, which is contained in these words, *cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground ?*

In which words we may observe,

1. In what light the *owner* of the vineyard views this *barren fig-tree*, that is to say, as a *cumber* of the

the ground, and as such, he makes but little account thereof, for he looks upon it as a *tree* of no real value, but one, that occupies the place of another, that might bring *honor* to *himself*; and be more *ornamental* to the *vineyard*; therefore he says to the *dresser* thereof, *cut it down*, for it not only stands in the way, but is a disgrace also to my vineyard.

But,

2. These words point out to us, what would be the *fate* of the Jews, for their *stubborn unbelief* and their *rejecting* Christ as the Messiah, for he came unto his own (we are told) and his own received him not. John i. 11. Now this part of my text, had its literal accomplishment, at the *destruction* of *Jerusalem*, when a very large number of the unbelieving Jews were destroyed or cut down, at the feast of the *passover*.—And we may observe,

3. That these words *cut it down*, point out moreover the *duty and conduct* of *God's ministers*, relative to *barran professors*; for such are to be removed from *Church-fellowship*, and their places filled up with others, that are likely to bring glory to *God*, the owner of the vineyard, and that will be more *ornamental* to the *vineyard* itself.

But having taken notice of the *owner's direction*;—
I pass on now,

III. To take notice of the *Dresser's Plea and Proposal*; his language is, *Lord, let it alone this year also*.

1. We may observe here, that the *dresser* spoken of in my text is *CHRIST*, and that many apply this part of our text, to his *intercession* in his *mediatorial* office for his people: but though Christ is a mediator, and makes *intercession* in that office for his people; yet it may be observed, that he did not appear in that office, when he delivered this parable, but as a man and minister, we find him *preaching* repentance.

repentance to the people; and in the *tenth* verse of this chapter, out of which my text is taken; it is expressly said, that he was *teaching* in one of their synagogues, on the sabbath. And this part of the parable also points out the duty of God's ministers (who are Christ's under-gardeners) to pray, or to intercede with God, on the behalf of *barren professors*, saying, Lord, (if it be thy will) let them alone this year also.—But let us take notice moreover,

2. Of the dresser's *proposal*, which is contained in words similar to these, I will *dig* about it, and *dung* it; alluding to the conduct of gardeners towards their barren trees; and may signify the various means, which Christ made use of, as *man* and *minister*; to bring the Jews to a belief in, and to an acknowledgment of him as the Messiah. And these words point out moreover, the duty of Christ's ministers, to make use of every mean in their power, in order to reach the case of *barren professors*, and if possible, to strike at the *root* of both *secret* and *open* sin, which is the cause of their barrenness, and exhibit to them the truths of the gospel: which if applied by God the Spirit to their hearts, will warm their *affections*, and make them *fruitful* in every good word and work.

Now, we may observe, that had Christ been interceding for this barren tree in his *mediatorial* office, here would have been no *if*; for as God, he must know whether this, or any other tree, would become fruitful, since it is from him, that their fruit is found. Besides, when he interceded as *mediator*, it is by way of *claim*; saying, Father, *WILL*, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: John xvii. 24. But in the part of our text, we find the word *if* twice mentioned, which can be no otherwise accounted for than by conceiving of Christ as a *man* and *minister*.

employed in preaching to the people ; and in this
office, Christ as well as the *Apostles* and succeeding
ministers, might with propriety say, if it bear fruit
well,—It is *well* for the tree *itself*;

It is *well* for the *vineyard*,

It is *well* for the *dresser*, and

It is *well* for the *owner* ;

for says Christ, herein is my Father glorified, that ye
 bear much fruit. John xv. 8. *And if not*—that is,
 if after all thy *patience*, and my *labor*, the tree do
 not become fruitful ; *then after that*, thou shalt cut
 it down ; nothing more will be said in its behalf,
 but full consent shall be given, and no more inter-
 cession made for it.

S E R M O N. CXV.

Acts ii. 23.

*Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and
 foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked
 hands have crucified and slain.*

IN the former part of this chapter, we have an
 account of the *descent* of the Holy Ghost upon
 the *Apostles*, and of the *effects* produced thereby, to
 the amazement of the by-standers, some of whom
 said, these men are full of new wine, against which
 charge, the Apostle *Peter* vindicates the other
Apostles, by shewing, that it was only an accom-
 plishment of what God had promised in *Joel's* pro-
 phecy.—He afterwards *addresses* them in the
 22^d verse of this chapter, saying, ye men of Israel,
 hear these words ; *Jesus* of Nazareth, a man ap-
 proved of God among you, by miracles, and won-
 ders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst
 of

of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God; ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

From these words we may observe,

1. *That Christ was delivered*—Now this is perfectly agreeable to what the Apostle Paul says in his Epistle to the Romans, where, when speaking of God the Father, he tells us, that he *spared not* his own Son, but *delivered* him up for us all, Rom. viii. 32. that is, for all the *elect* of God, spoken of in the following verse to the above-mentioned.

And here let it be remembered, that Christ was *delivered* by the *Father*, into the hands of *Judas*, who was one of his Disciples, and who betrayed him. Now with this circumstance our Lord was perfectly acquainted, for it is said of him, that he knew *who* should betray him; John vi. 64. therefore by this *Judas* it was, that Christ was delivered into the hands of the *Jews*; for having covenanted with them, he said, whomsoever I shall *kiss*, the same is he; *hold him fast*. Matt. xxvi. 48.

But Christ was *delivered* also by the *Jews*, unto *Pilate* the Roman governor: for when they had bound him (we are told) they *delivered* him to *Pontius Pilate* the governor; (Matt. xxvii. 2.) who interrogated him respecting the charges which were brought against him, but Christ answered him never a word. Matt. xxvii. 14. Now, notwithstanding they could find *no fault* in Christ, and that Pilate declared him to be a *just person*, (Matt. xxvii. 24.) yet we find he *delivered* him to the *soldiers* to be crucified; for the soldiers of the governor, took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the *whole band* of *soldiers*, who *stripped* him, and put on him a *scarlet robe*, and platted a crown of

threw upon his head, and having spit upon him, *scourged* him, *mocked* him, and treated him with every mark of disdain and contempt; they led him away to crucify him; (Matt. x. vii. 27--31.) and here it was, that he was *delivered* into the hands of *death*, and into the hands of *justice*, for the sins of his people; therefore says the Apostle, *he was delivered* for our offences. Rom. iv. 25.

But having made an observation on Christ's being *delivered*, we may observe,

II. That this was done, by the *determinate Counsel* and *Foreknowledge* of God.—

First, God *foreknew* this event respecting the death of Christ; as he does also every other *circumstance*, relating both to *men* and *things*; for known unto God, are all his works from the beginning; (Acts xv. 18.) neither is there any *creature* that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are *naked* and *open* unto the eyes of him, with whom we have to do. Heb. iv. 13. Therefore God *foreknew* not only the *death*, but also the *birth* of Christ; together with the *treatment* with which he met, even from the cradle to the cross; and therefore must be well acquainted with the *traitor* Judas, as well as with the *murderers* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; nor was there a single thing that befel him in time, which God did not *foresee* and *foreknow*, even before time commenced: and as this applies to Christ, so also it applies to every *creature* which God hath made, and were this not the case, he might be *surprised* with something *to-morrow*, which *yesterday* he neither looked for, nor expected.—

And as the death of Christ was according to God's *foreknowledge*, so also—

Secondly, it was by his *determinate counsel*: agree-

Y y

able

able to which, the Apostle says, he worketh all things, after the counsel of his own will : Eph. i. 11. and if he work *all things* according to the counsel of his own will, then the death of Christ must be according thereto, and this *fixed resolution*, and *will determination* of God respecting the death of Christ, was ——— To glorify his *perfections*, and

For the *salvation* of his people,
whom he had chosen in Christ for that purpose. —

But,

Should it be urged by any, that as the death of Christ was according to the *determinate counsel* of God, his murderers did the will of God, and were therefore blameless :

We may observe,

III. That the Apostle says, it was done by *wicked Hands* : therefore although the death of Christ was *determined* of God, for his own glory and his people's good ; yet it was nevertheless *sinful* in those who perpetrated the *horrid deed* ; for although they were instruments of fulfilling the *prophecies* relating to Christ, and accomplishing what he came into the world to do ; yet they did it out of *envy* in a *wicked person*, with *wicked hands*, influenced by a *wicked heart*. So that although their conduct tended to fulfil the designs of God, and to bring about the greatest deliverance for his people ; no thanks were due to them, for they *meant it for evil*, although God over-ruled it for good. Gen. i. 20. Now though God suffers the wicked to go on in sin, as he can over-rule it for what purpose he pleases ; as he can make the wrath of man praise him, (Psal. lxxvi. 10.) yet he is *not* the *author* of sin, for he tempts no man to evil, (James i. 13.) but when men sin, they follow the dictates of Satan, and their own wicked hearts, and do it *not by force*, but *freely* and *voluntarily*.

voluntarily; for God puts nothing into the hearts of men to incline them to evil; and though it is said, that the *Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh*, it cannot mean that God put any thing into Pharaoh's heart to make it hard; but that he left him to the corruption and vitiosity of his own nature, which he might justly do; and it is owing to his abundant grace and mercy in Christ Jesus; that all are not left as he was.

But we may observe here, that the death which Christ died, is called by the Apostle the *death of the cross*, for he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; Phil. ii. 8. and in my text it is said, *him ye have taken, and by wicked hands ye have crucified and slain*: by which word *slain*, the Apostle doubtless meant, to fasten the horrid crime of murder upon their consciences, for they took away the life of the innocent Jesus, and were justly charged with *slaying or murdering him*, in consequence thereof.

SERMON CXVI.

Ecclesiastes v. 4, 5.

When thou owest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

THE verses which precede my text, contain directions concerning the *worship of God*, and how persons should *behave*, when they go to the house of God. — Directions are given also, concerning *hearing the word of God*, to which there ought to be a readiness; and likewise concerning *prayer*.

to God, which should not be uttered *rashly*, nor *hastily*, nor yet with *many words*; for it is said on this account, *let thy words be few*.—Then follow directions concerning *vows*, which should not be made *rashly*, and when made, they ought to be kept, as is evident from the words of my text.

In speaking on which, I shall,

- I. Point out the *Nature* of a *Vow*,
- II. Insist upon the *Payment* of it, and
- III. Shew, why it is better *not to vow*, than to vow and not pay.

First then, I am to point out to you, the *nature of a Vow*: and here let it be remembered brethren, that a *vow* is a *solemn promise*, which is made *freely* and *voluntarily*, on the part of the person who makes it, and to which he was not *obliged*; there being no precept for *vows* in the word of God; though there are *instances* and *examples* thereof, and they may be *lawfully* made, when they are in the *power* of a man to perform them, and are not *inconsistent* with the *word* and *will* of God. But before a man makes a *vow*, or *promise*, either to God or man, he ought to consider whether he can pay that which he *voweth*, either to the one, or the other; and if he cannot, it is *better* not to *vow* at all.

But we may observe here, that the *vows*, or *promises* which have been made by *good men*, have been made with an eye to the Lord for strength to enable them to pay their *vows*. Accordingly we find David *vowing*, or promising the Lord, saying, *I will teach transgressors thy ways*. Psal. li. 13. Now we may observe here, that David was not called upon by the Lord to make this promise, and that when he did make it, it was with an eye to the Lord for strength, for he had before said, restore

unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit, then (says he) will I teach transgressors thy ways.

Another instance of this kind we meet with in Psalm cxix. 32. where David *promises* God, saying, *I will run the way of thy commandments*; but then, even this *promise* is made with an eye to the Lord for *strength*; as is obvious by the following words, namely, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.—But again, we find the Church in the *Song of Solomon* making also a vow, or solemn promise to God, saying, *we will run after thee*, Song i. 4. but then, she had an eye to God herein, for before she makes this promise, she cries unto the Lord, and says, *draw me*; by which words it evidently appears, that if God did not draw, she could not run after him. See 1 Cor. iv. 19. Heb. vi. iii. James iv. 15.

But, there are some promises, or vows which are made *ignorantly*, and without an eye to God, for *strength* to perform *them*. Of this nature (I presume) is that promise, or vow made by *Pharaoh*, when he said to Moses and Aaron, entreat the Lord, that he may take away the *frogs* from me, and from my people, and *I will let the people go*; (Exod. viii. 2.) but when he saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and *refused* to perform his promise, or pay his vow.

We find also, that *Peter* made a very *hasty promise* or *vow* of this kind, when he said to Christ, if I should die with thee, *I will not deny thee in any ages* (Mark xiv. 31.) and—as this promise was made *hastily*, when Peter was ignorant of his own *weakness*, and without an eye to the Lord for *strength*; so also we find, that he as *hastily broke it*, as appears from the seventy-first verse of the above-mentioned chapter, where we find him denying Christ, with oaths and curses.

Of this nature also, are those promises and vows which are made by those who call themselves *godfathers and godmothers*, who promise and *vow three things* in the name of the children for whom they stand,—“*First*, that they shall renounce the Devil, and all his *works*, the *pomps* and *vanities* of this wicked world, and *all the sinful lusts* of the flesh;—“*Secondly*, that they shall *believe all the articles* of the christian faith;—and *Thirdly*, that they shall *keep God’s holy will and commandments*, and walk in the same all the days of their lives.”—(Church Catechism.)

But surely none but the *thoughtless, careless, and ignorant*, would thus promise to God for *another*, what they never *have* done, nor never can do for themselves: for where are the characters to be found that can live *sinless* themselves? and if they cannot live *sinless* themselves, how dare they *solemnly promise and vow*, in the presence of God and the congregation, that the children for whom they stand shall so live? and yet this is implied in the strongest terms, in keeping *God’s holy will and commandments, and walking in the same all the days of their lives*. And here I would observe, that so far are many of these godfathers and godmothers so called, from paying their vows, or performing their promises; that sometimes they do not see the children for whom they stand any more; but are equally as careless about *them*, as they are about the *promises* which they have made to God for them.—But again,

Another promise, or *vow* of this nature, is that which is made by those who are confirmed by the Bishop, who *solemnly asks the children this question*, “do ye here in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and *vow* that was made in your name at your baptism, *renew* saying and confirming the same in your own persons.”

"and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe, and "to do ALL those things, which your godfathers "and godmothers then undertook for you?" to all which, the children answer, "I DO;" that is, we do acknowledge ourselves bound to BELIEVE and to DO, what they promised for us; which in fact was, that they should never commit a single sin. But this kind of promises or vows, are too awful to reflect upon; nor need there be any thing said I presume, to expose their absurdity and unlawfulness: for no man can make agreement unto God for another; nor can any do, what their godfathers and godmothers promise for them.

But promises, or vows are often made ignorantly, and without an eye to the Lord for strength, by persons who are under the afflicting hand of God: for such frequently promise God at these seasons, that "if he will but spare them, and recover their health and strength, they will forsake their sinful practices, and devote themselves to him;" but alas! too often it is, that promises thus made in time of affliction and without an eye to the Lord for strength, are broken in time of health; for such frequently turn, like a dog to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. 2 Peter ii. 22.

But having taken notice of the vow, I proceed now—

II. To insist upon the Payment of it,—for says my text; when thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for, as a man when a promise is made to him by another, has a right to expect the performance of it, so it is with God, who also hath a right to expect the payment of those vows, which we make unto him; and this was really the case with Hannah, of whom we read

read in 1 Sam. i. 11, 28 where we find, she not only *vowed*, but also *payed her vow*, which she made unto the Lord, concerning the child *Samuel*; and David moreover says, thou, O God, hast *heard my vows*; and again, so will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may *daily perform my vows*. Psal. lxi. 5, 8. Now what David *vowed*, or promised unto God, we have recorded in the fourth verse of the above psalm, where he says; *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings.*

When thou voweſt a vow unto God therefore, imitate *Hannah* and *David* in this respect, and defer not to pay it; for ſays my text, he *hath no pleaſure in FOOLS*: mark brethren, the Lord looks upon, and calls all thoſe *fools*, who make promiſes, or *vows*, and do not pay them; and tells us moreover, that he *hath no pleaſure* in them: and ſurely to promiſe unto God, either for *ourſelves*, or *others*, what we have not in our power to perform, is a diſplay of the higheſt degree of *folly* and *mockery* that a man can be guilty of; but let ſuch remember, *that God will not be mocked*, but ſooner or later, he will reſent ſuch conduct.

It is well however for God's people, that there is an *atonement* made for ſin, by Jeſus Chriſt; for were that not the caſe, this conduct of theirs would be *eternally reſented* by that God, againſt whom they ſin, by neglecting to perform their promiſes, or to *pay their vows*, which they make unto him: therefore when thou voweſt a vow unto God, defer not to pay it.

But this leads me to ſhew,

III. *Why it is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay.*

1. *It is better for yourſelves.* For if you do not

vow, you will neither *discover* your *folly*, nor yet *entangle* your *minds*, which is frequently the case with many *ignorant people*, who *vow* unto God, but are not able to pay it. There are many for instance, who *promise*, or *vow* unto the Lord, that they will never more be guilty of some particular sin, which they have formerly committed, but alas! notwithstanding their *solemn vows*, they are overtaken with the same sin again; by which their *vow* is broken, their minds are entangled, and perhaps Satan suggests, that there is *no mercy* for them. Surely then, it is better *not to vow*, than to *vow* and *not pay*.—But as it is better for yourselves, so also it is

2. *Better*, because it is more for *God's glory*; for as he is a God of *truth* and *faithfulness* himself, every thing that is *false* and *unfaithful*, must be a dishonor to him. Therefore, *pay that thou vowest*, or *vow* not at all; and by thus doing the *glory* of God will be promoted by you.—But it is *better*

3. For the *cause of God*, not to *vow*, than that thou shouldest *vow* and *not pay*: for the cause of God can never fail of suffering by the *foolish* and *sinful* conduct of the professors of religion; and what can a *bystander* think of *religion*, when he bears a set of *worshippers* so called, *vowing* unto God, what they never mean to pay? and if they meant it, they have it not in their power so to do: surely such give great occasion to the *enemies* of God to blaspheme; (2 Sam. xii. 14.) and to think *meanly* and *contemptibly* of that *religion*, of which they make a profession.

S E R M O N CXVII.

Job xiv. 14.

—*All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

JOB having turned himself from his friends to God, continues his address to him in this chapter; in which he discourses on the *frailty* of man, the *shortness* of life, the *troubles* that are in it, the *finfulness* of it, and its *limited duration*, beyond which it cannot continue.—In the thirteenth verse, he cries out in distress, saying, O that thou wouldest appoint me a *set time* and remember me! (Psal. xxxix. 4.) or to deliver me from my *affliction*; but Job recollecting that there was such a time, says, in the words of my text, *all the days of my appointed time, will I wait till my change come.*

In discoursing on which words, I shall,

- I. Take notice of this *Change*, and
- II. Of Job's *Willingness* to wait for it.

First then, I am to take notice of this *Change*; by which some understand a *change* of Job's *outward circumstances*, or a deliverance from his *afflictions* under which he laboured; but this does not appear to be the case, for although there was such a *change* befel Job, yet he was at this time in no expectation of it, and although his friends suggested it to him, he had no hope of it, but often expresses the contrary: therefore *not a change of outward circumstances* is meant:—

But, a *change by death* is intended, that being the *subject*, on which he had been speaking, in the words immediately

immediately before my text, where he says, if a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my *change* come; from which words we may learn, that Job expected to die; this appears also from another passage where he says; *I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and in the house appointed for all living.* Job xxx. 23.

Now we may observe here, that *death* (which is a separation of the soul from the body) may very properly be called a *change*, because in that awful moment there is

1. *A change of place*; for the *body* returns to the earth from whence it was taken; and the *spirit* returns unto God who gave it; and will either take up its abode in *mansions of bliss*, or in the *dark regions of endless woe*.

But death may be called a change also, because there is—

2. *A change of company*, namely, of men for angels, either good or bad; the *impenitently wicked* must take up their abode with the *Devil* and his *angels*, Matt. xxv. 41. and the *righteous*, with God, and the *spirits of just men* made perfect. Heb. xii. 23.

But death may be called a *change* also, because it is,

3. *A change of states*, for here the conditions of men are *changeable*, but at death, they enter upon an *unalterable* state of *happiness* or *misery*; for the wicked shall go away into *everlasting punishment*; but the *righteous* into *life eternal*. Matt. xxv. 46. Thus then doth man give up the Ghost, and where is he? Job xiv. 10. the answer is ready; for he is either with the glorified throng above, or with infernal spirits in the regions of black despair.

But we may observe again, that man will undergo another *change* respecting his *body*, in the morning

ing of the *resurrection*, for says the Apostle; when speaking of Christ, (he) shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his *glorious body*, (Phil. iii. 21.) and some think, that this is the *change*, to which Job alludes in the words of my text; but allowing that it be so, yet, the former *change* which takes place at death, must be included, as is evident from the text itself, and the verse that precedes it.

But having taken notice of the *change*; I shall proceed now to take notice,

II. Of Job's *Willingness* to wait for it. This is expressed in these words, namely, all the days of my *appointed time* will I wait; he well knew (no doubt) that there is a *time* to every purpose under Heaven, Eccl. iii. 1. and if so, then there must be a *set time* for the deliverance of God's people out of all their afflictions; and till that moment comes, *God waits to be gracious to them*; Isai. xxx. 18. nor will he go out of his way to deliver, a single moment before his appointed time, either

In a way of *providence*,

In a way of *grace*, or

By *death*;

for as there is a *fixed time* for a man to be born, so also there is a *fixed time* for him to die: this is evident from the words of the wise man, where he says, a time *to be born*, and a time *to die*. Eccl. iii. 2.

This is plain also from various other parts of the word of God. Job for instance, says in his seventh chapter and at the *first* verse, is there not an *appointed time* unto man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling? by which questions, we are not to understand that Job doubted of the fact, for they imply no such thing; but a *confirmation* of the truth of the subject on which he

looks. The latter of the above questions is very striking to the purpose, for when he says, are not his days like the days of an *hireling*, he evidently means to suggest, that they really are so, and as an *hireling*, or servant that is taken for an *appointed time*, is discharged at the *expiration* thereof, just so it is with man, who when he has lived his *appointed time* upon earth, his soul is dismissed from his body, which (body) then returns to the dust, from whence it was taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Gen. iii. 19.

This same writer says also, when speaking on the *life of man*, that his days are *determined*, the number of his *months* are with thee; thou hast appointed his *bounds* which he *cannot pass*: Job xiv. 5. which passage clearly proves the truth contained in the words of my text, namely, that there is an *appointed time* for man upon earth, for which Job was willing to wait, knowing that the number of his *months, days, hours, and moments*, were determined by the Lord.

This truth may be proved also, from John's gospel, where it is said, Jesus knew that his *hour* was come, that he should depart out of *this world*, unto the Father, (John xiii. 1.) from whence it evidently appears, that there was a *fixed hour*, for the death of Christ; beyond which he could not pass, nor could he die a moment before that time, for although the Jews sought to take him, yet no man could lay hands on him, because his *hour* was not yet come. John vii. 30.

But some perhaps may object, saying, the psalmist tells us, that *bloody and deceitful men* shall not live out half their days. Psal. lv. 23. But be it remembered here, that these men (any more than any others) do not die before their *appointed time*; though they do not live out half the days, which they pro-

mise to themselves to live ; or, which according to *human probability* they were *likely* to live, if they had not fallen into the hands of *justice*, and suffered for their blood-thirsty conduct.

But others perhaps, may bring forward the world of the wise man as an objection, who says, the fear of the Lord *prolongeth days* ; but the years of the wicked shall be *shortened*. Prov. x. 27. But we may observe here, that the wise man is speaking after the manner of men, for *humanly speaking*, the fear of the Lord teacheth men to walk in such ways, as have an apparent tendency to *prolong* life ; and on the contrary, the *wicked* walk in such ways, as appear to have a tendency to *shorten* their lives ; but neither the one, nor the other, live *longer*, or die *sooner*, than their *appointed time*. For we see many *young people die* who fear the Lord, therefore their fearing God, did not prolong their lives to old age ; and the reason is, because they were *appointed* to die in their *younger days*.—On the contrary, there are many who live in wickedness all their days, and yet are spared till *old age* ; and the reason is, because God had *not appointed* them to die in their *youthful days*. Therefore neither the *virtuous* conduct of the *righteous* ; nor yet the *vice*ous conduct of the *wicked*, can lengthen the life of the one, nor shorten the life of the other ; any farther, than as they are means of bringing about their appointed end.

But another objection which is frequently made against an *appointed period for men's lives*, is the case of *Hezekiah*, for although the Lord had said to him, *thou shalt die and not live* ; he afterwards told him, *I will add unto thy days, fifteen years*. *Isai. xxxv. 5.* But we may observe here, that although God said, that *Hezekiah should die*, he did not say that he should die ; nor is the *addition* spoken of in the

text, an addition to his *appointed time*, but an addition to the days which he had then lived, in order to make up that time: or it was an *addition* to his days, because it was a longer time than he, (from the nature of the *disease* and the *message delivered* to him) expected to live.

But to return, Job knowing that there was an *appointed time* for him upon the earth, determines to wait patiently for it; that is, to live in the constant expectation of *death*, at which time he knew there would be a change, that is to say, not only a change of *place* and a change of *company*, but also a change of *states*; all of which would be to his advantage, agreeable to the words of the Apostle; for to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Phil. i. 21.

SERMON CXVIII.

1 John ii. 2.

And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

THE design of the Apostle in these words, is to comfort his *little children* with the *advocacy* and *propitiatory sacrifice* of Christ.—In the verse therefore which precedes my text, he says; my *little children*, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not; (but) if any man do sin, we have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the *propitiation* for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. These words are said by some, very much to favor the doctrine of *universal redemption*; whether that be a truth or not, shall be my business

business in the following pages of this sermon, to investigate; and in doing which,

I shall attend to the order of the words, and shall shew,

I. That Christ is the *Propitiation* for sins, that is, for sin of every kind,

For *original* sin,
For *actual* sin,
For *sinful actions*,
For *sinful words*, and
For *sinful thoughts*—or
For sins of *omission*, and
For sins of *commission*:

for all of which, Christ is called in my text, *the propitiation*, that is, he is the person who has made *atonement*, *peace*, or *reconciliation*, as the word *propitiation* signifies: agreeable to which the Apostle Paul says, we also joy in God, through Jesus Christ, by whom *we have received the atonement*. Rom. v. 11. From which words we find, that Christ not only *made atonement* to God for sins, but that the Apostle and these *Romans* had (by faith) received it.

We may observe again, that the same inspired Apostle says, when speaking of Christ; that he is *our peace*: Eph. ii. 14. that is, he is

Our *peace-maker*,
Our *peace-giver*, and
Our *peace-maintainer*;

and this peace we are informed, is the result of his *death*, he having *made peace through the blood of his cross*. Col. i. 20.

And as Christ hath *made peace* through the blood of his cross; so also it is said; he made *reconciliation for iniquity*, (Dan. ix. 24.) and the Apostle tells us, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, that it was

hoved (Christ) to be made like unto his *brethren*; that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make *reconciliation*, for the sins of *his people*. Heb. ii. 17. From these two passages of God's word, the doctrine of *reconciliation* is clearly pointed out; and that a *reconciliation to God* must be intended, is obvious, because it is a *reconciliation* for iniquity, or for the sins of his people.

Now, be it remembered brethren; that all that is meant by the doctrine of *reconciliation* is, that Christ having fulfilled the *law* in his life, as the *surety* of his people; he then suffered the *penalty* thereof, in their room and stead; for he gave his *life* a ransom for *many*; (Matt. xx. 28.) and delivered them from the *curse of the law*, being made a *curse* for them. Gal. iii. 13. But we may observe here, that the *reconciliation* (spoken of, is *not* a reconciliation to the *love of God*; (for that, towards the *persons* of his people, is invariably the same) but a *reconciliation*, atonement or satisfaction to the *law and justice* of God is intended, the former is *fulfilled* in Christ's life, and the latter is *satisfied* in his death, therefore it is said, that God is *just*, and (yet) the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Rom. iii. 26.

Now this *satisfaction* observe, was made by *promise*, in the covenant of grace, when Christ said, lo! I come to *do thy will*, O God, Heb. x. 9. which promise was as efficacious with God, on the behalf of the people for whom Christ engaged, as though it had been then accomplished. But though the promise was *given* in the covenant of grace, which was *before time*; it was not *actually* fulfilled, till Christ lived and suffered *in time*; therefore it is said by the Apostle, that when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman,

man, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law; Gal. iv. 4, 5. and thereby to fulfil his *promise* made in the covenant of grace; when he said, lo! I come to do thy will, O God; and thus it was that Christ became the *propitiation* for sins; and thereby made *satisfaction* to the law and *justice* of God; or in other words, made *reconciliation* to him for iniquity. Dan. xii. 24.

But having shewn that Christ is the *propitiation* for sins;—we may take notice,

II. Of the *Persons*, for whose sins he is the propitiation:—my text says, not for *ours only*, but for the sins of the *whole world*.—Now by the word *ours*, his *own sins*, and the *sins* of his *little children*, mentioned in the *first* verse are intended: and by these *little children*, are meant true *believers* in Christ, who are—Children by *adoption*, and

Children by *birth*;

and he gives these children to understand, that as Christ is the *propitiation* for *their sins*; so he is also, for the *sins* of the *whole world*; by which words some understand, every *individual person* in the world; but that this cannot be the meaning of the text, is obvious, I think, to every *unprejudiced person*; for if Christ be the *propitiation* for the sins of every individual, he must have paid the *debt* of every individual, and if so, justice can have no demand upon them, and consequently every individual must go to Heaven, or God must appear *unjust*. But this idea contradicts a known truth, contained in another portion of his word, wherein it is said, broad is the *way* that leadeth to *destruction*, and many there be that go in thereat. Now, if many go to Hell, it must be for sin, but the sins of God's people are—removed from them, Rom. iv. 8.—charged to Christ, Isai. liii. 6.—and atoned for by him: 1 Peter ii. 24.—and therefore it is utterly impossible

possible for any of those to suffer in *Hell*, for whom Christ suffered on earth.

Besides it should be observed, that the words WORLD and WHOLE WORLD, &c. are not to be understood in an *unlimited*, but in a *limited* sense, as will obviously appear, by examining the scriptures on this head. If we attend to the gospel of St. Luke, we shall find, that there went out a decree from *Cesar Augustus*, that *all the world* should be taxed: (Luke ii. 1.) but then, by *all the world*, not every individual is intended, but the *Roman Empire* only.

Again it is said also, in the gospel of St. John, perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, *the world* is gone after him, (John xii. 19.) but then by *the world* in this text, *every individual* cannot be meant, but a large number at most is intended thereby.

It is said moreover in John xv. 19. if ye were of the *world*, the *world* would love its own, but because ye are not of the *world*, but I have chosen you out of the *world*, therefore the world hateth you. But then by the term *world* in this text, every individual cannot be intended, but the *unconverted* only. See 1 John v. 19.

Sometimes by the term *world*, only *real believers* are intended. Accordingly it is said, the bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life: (namely *spiritual life*) unto the *world*, John vi. 33, that is, unto the *converted part* thereof; for the *unconverted*, are dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1.

At other times by *the world*, the *Gentiles* (only) are intended, as appears obviously from the words of the Apostle, where he says, (when speaking of the Jews) that the fall of them, was the riches of *the world*, that is, of the *Gentiles*. Rom. xi. 12.—
But

But again, it is said moreover in the gospel of St. John, behold the lamb of God, which *taketh away* the sin of *the world*; John i. 29. but men, by the *world*, in this text, every individual cannot be meant, for if Christ *took away* the sins of every individual, then none could die in their sins, nor be punished in Hell for them; but we are assured in God's word, that the wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God; Psal. ix. 17. which could not be the case, were their sins *taken away* by Christ; therefore by *the world* in this text, the *elect of God* only are intended; whose sins he took away from *them*, and bore the *charge* and *punishment* thereof, in his own body on the tree. These then are the people for whose sins Christ is the *propitiation*, and of whom the Apostle speaks, when he says, not for ours only, but for the sins of (the *elect* of) the whole world. Accordingly it is said of Christ, thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, *out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation*; Rev. v. 9. and they being thus redeemed by Christ, it is said of them, that he shall *save his people* from their sins, Matt. i. 21. he shall save them with a *present*, and with an *everlasting salvation*, they shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. Isai. xlv. 17.

From what has been said on this head, we may see the absolute necessity of attending to the *meaning* of words, as well as to their *sound*; because a word of the same *sound*, may have many *acceptations* in the word of God; and sometimes perhaps the *same word*, even in *the same text* has a different meaning; as the word *world* (for instance) has in John i. 10. where it is said, Christ was in the *world*, (that is, the habitable earth) and the *world* (that is, the whole universe) was made by him, and the *world*, (that is, some of the inhabitants thereof) knew him not.

SERMON

S E R M O N CXIX.

Revelations xiv. 13.

—Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord—

DEATH, is the common lot of all men, for it is appointed unto man *once* to die.—It comes upon him in consequence of sin, for says an inspired Apostle, the wages of sin is *death*. But then though *death* is certain to all men, yet the *time* in which it will take place, is uncertain to every man: for although the *number* of his *months* are with God, yet from him they are wisely concealed. Our Lord's *exhortation* therefore upon this occasion becomes seasonable, namely, *watch*, for ye know not at *what hour* your Lord doth come.—Now although the *day* of *death*, will be a *woful* day to the wicked; yet it will be a blessed and glorious day, to all the *children* of God, as is obvious from the words of my text, wherein it is said, *blessed* are the *dead* which *die* in the Lord.

In discoursing on these words, I shall shew,

- I. What is implied in *Dying in the Lord*, and
- II. Take notice of the *Blessedness* of such.

First then, I am to shew, what is implied in *Dying in the Lord*; under which head we may observe,

- I. That to *die in the Lord*, is to die *in union with the Lord*. And this is sure to be the privilege of God's people, all of whom, have a *secret* being in Christ, even *before conversion*; for says the Apostle, he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in (or through) love. Eph. i. 4. Agree-
able

able to which also, the Apostle *Jude* speaks at the beginning of his Epistle, which he dedicates and directs, to them that were *sanctified* (or separated) by *God the Father*, preserved in *Christ Jesus*, and called as the effect thereof; from both which passages, it evidently appears, that there is a *real union* between *Christ* and his people, which took place *before time*, and becomes *manifested in time*, by their *effectual calling*, for which purpose, they were both *chosen* and *preserved* in *Christ Jesus*.

But to *die in the Lord*, is to die

2. In the *faith of the Lord*. Agreeable to which, it is said by the Apostle, (after he had been speaking of *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah* and *Abraham*) *these all died in faith*, (Heb. xi. 13.) that is, in the faith of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, who is,

The *object*,

The *author*, and

The *finisher* thereof:

these all possessed the faith of *God's elect*, which is the *gift of God*, of the *operation of his spirit*, and which purifies the heart, and works by love:

In this faith they *lived*, and

In this faith they *died*,

as do all those who are *regenerated* by the spirit of *God*.

But to *die in the Lord*, is to die also—

3. In the *fear of the Lord*. This fear is a *new-covenant blessing*, which is communicated to the souls of *God's people* in regeneration; in order to secure their *obedience* to him, and to preserve them from *total apostacy*. Therefore says the *Lord*, I will put my *fear* in their *hearts*, that they shall not depart from me, Jer. xxxii. 40. and as he puts it there, so also he maintains it, and it becomes *manifested*, by their *bating evil*, and *departing* from it.

But

But again, to *die in the Lord*, is to die also,

4. In the *favor of the Lord*. And this is sure to be the case with all the *children of God*, because there never was a moment, in which they were *out of favor* with him. *David* being conscious of this, says, remember me, O Lord, with the *favor* that thou bearest unto *thy people*; Psal. cvi. 4. which *favor or love*, was *from eternity*, and will continue *is eternity*, towards those who are the objects thereof. This is the source of every mercy, which they partake of *at*, and *after* regeneration; for having loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness he (in regeneration) draws them to himself; and this is a *manifestation* of that *love or favor*, which he bears towards them.

But having shewn you, what is implied in *dying in the Lord*; I come now,

II. To take notice of the *Blessedness* of such. And here we may observe—

1. That they are *blessed* with a *kingdom*, which is
Prepared for them, and
Given to them;

for this is the record, that God hath *given* to us *eternal life*, and this life is in his son. 1 John v. 11. We are therefore informed, that *eternal life*, is the *gift of God*, through Jesus Christ our Lord; Rom. vi. 23. and all those to whom it is *given*, shall be made meet for it, (Col. i. 12.) and put in possession of it, for such will be addressed, with, come, ye *blessed of my Father*, inherit the *kingdom prepared* for you from the foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 34.

But those who *die in the Lord*, are blessed—

2. With respect to their *company*; for such enjoy God, without a vail between: here, we see through a glass *darkly*, but there, *face to face*; now we know

know in part, but then shall we know, even as also we are known. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. And as they will be *blessed* with the *enjoyment of God*, so also they will be *blessed* with the company of *Angels*, and the *spirits of just men made perfect*, and will join the general assembly and church of the *first-born*, (Christ) which are written in Heaven; Heb. xii. 23. for they being *blessed* with

The pardon of sin,
A justifying righteousness, and
An inward meetness,

shall join the *disembodied* throng, in singing this glorious *doxology*; namely; unto him that hath *loved us*, and *washed us* from our *sins* in his *own blood*; and hath made us *kings and priests* unto *God and his Father*, to him be *glory and dominion* for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. i. 5, 6.

But those who *die in the Lord*, are *blessed* also,

3. With a *freedom from all labour*; for we are informed in the verse out of which my text is taken; that they *rest from their labours*, and their *works do follow them*. Mark christian, your works do not go *before*, to open Heaven for you: but they will come *behind*, or *follow* you, as so many *evidences*, of the *reality of your love to God*; and so mindful is the Lord of the *good works* of the *Saints*, (unto which they are created anew) that although they do not purchase Heaven for them, yet, whosoever shall give, even a cup of cold water to one of Christ's *little ones*, in the name of a *disciple*; shall in no wise lose *his reward*; (Matt. x. 42.) which is not a reward of debt observe, but a reward of *grace*.

But these *blessed ones* who *die in the Lord*, are said to *rest from their labours*, not only from their *daily calling*, in a *literal* sense of the word, but also from their *labours of love*, in a *spiritual* sense; for

for there is *no work*, nor device in the grave whither thou goest. Therefore, whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Eccl. ix. 10.

But they are blessed moreover,

4. With a *full and complete* deliverance from *sin and sorrow*, which are *inseparably connected*. Accordingly we are told, that there shall in no wise enter into the *heavenly Jerusalem*, any thing that *defileth*, neither whatsoever *worketh abomination*, or *maketh a lie*: but they (only) who are written in the *lamb's book of life*; Rev. xxi. 27. and as there is *no sin* in those pure regions, so neither is there any *sorrow, sickness, or death*; for God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more *death*, neither *sorrow* nor *crying*, neither shall there be any more *pain*; for the former things are passed away. Rev. xxi. 4.

S E R M O N CXX.

Acts xxvi. 22.

Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day.—

IN this chapter we find *Paul* standing before *Agrippa*, in whose presence he *freely and openly* declares his *manner of life*, saying, that after the strictest sect of our religion, *I lived a Pharisee*; and now I stand and am judged for the *hope of the promise* made of God unto our *fathers*.—He then simply declares his *conversion*, and also his *call* to the work of the *ministry*, and tells us; he was not *obedient to the heavenly vision*, but went immediately about the work, whereunto God had called him; and although on account thereof, the Jews caught him in the temple, and went about to kill him,

A a a

him,

him, yet, says he; *having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day.*

In speaking on which words, I shall shew,

I. In *what Respects* Paul continued, and

II. By *what Power* he continued.

First then, I am to shew in *what Respects* Paul continued.—And here we may observe,

1. That he continued his *natural life*; which was frequently in danger, from those who were enemies to the doctrine of Christ, and him crucified. Accordingly we are told, that the Jews took counsel to *kill him*, but their laying await was known of Saul: and they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the Disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket; (Acts ix. 23, 24.) by which mean, he escaped with his life.

But again, we are informed also, that there came certain Jews from *Antioch* and *Iconium*, who being much enraged against *Paul*, persuaded the people; and having *stoned him*, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Acts xiv. 19.

This same truth is confirmed also, in Acts xxii. 26, 21. where we are informed concerning him, that the Jews have agreed to desire thee, (the Chief Captain) that thou wouldest bring down *Paul* to-morrow into the counsel, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly; but do not thou yield to them; for there he is waited for of them, *more than forty men*, who have bound themselves with an *oath*, that they will neither eat nor drink, till they have killed him; but notwithstanding this *conspiracy*, Paul was kept out of their hands, and his natural life was continued all the days of his appointed time.

But as he continued his *natural life*, so likewise—

2. He continued his *spiritual life*, that also being

in the hands of God. Agreeable to which he tells the Colossians, *your life is hid with Christ in God*; (Col. iii. 3.) and therefore must be secure, notwithstanding all the attacks that *Satan* may make upon it. Accordingly Christ tells his Disciples, *because I live, you shall live also*; John xiv. 19. for in consequence of their union to him, they receive their life from him, as do the branches from the vine, or as the members receive their life from the head: while therefore, there is life in the head, the members must be supplied therewith. But we may observe again,

3. The Apostle continued his *work* also, notwithstanding all the opposition with which he met, for as the Lord *made* him a minister, he was always *ready*, both in season and out of season, to preach that gospel which was committed to him, therefore when writing to the Romans, he says, as much as in me is, I am *ready* to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also: Rom. i. 15. and so faithful and diligent was he in the discharge of his duty, that he kept back nothing that was profitable to them, but taught them *publicly* and *from house to house*. Acts xx. 20. In this employment Paul continued from the time God called him to it, till he was called to join the *general assembly*, and church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven; Heb. xii. 23. and as he thus continued a *witness* for Christ and his gospel, in the presence of *small* and *great* in his life; so also, he died a witness for them, and is now a *witness* of salvation by free and sovereign grace, at God's right hand in glory; for says he, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give me at that day. 2 Tim. ii. 7, 8.—But as he continued his *work*, so also,

4. He continued his *usefulness*, not only in *awakening* those, who were in a state of nature, but also in *comforting* and *building up* the Saints, in their most holy faith; as well as in *detecting* and *confuting* those errors, which were then abroad in the world; for as God qualified and sent him into the work of the ministry; so also he made *use* of him as an *instrument*, for the purposes above-mentioned; (Acts xxvi. 18.) and although his, and Christ's enemies did all they could to *traduce* his *character*, in order to *prevent* his *usefulness*, (which is the conduct of too many in this our day) yet God was mindful of his *promise*, and crowned his labours with abundant success.

In these respects then it might be said by the Apostle, *I continue to this day*; and I trust also that in these respects, in *some measure*, the unworthy writer can say with the Apostle, that notwithstanding all opposition, *I continue to this day*.

But having shewn in *what respects* the Apostle *continued*, I proceed to shew,

II. By *what Power* he continued: and here we may observe,

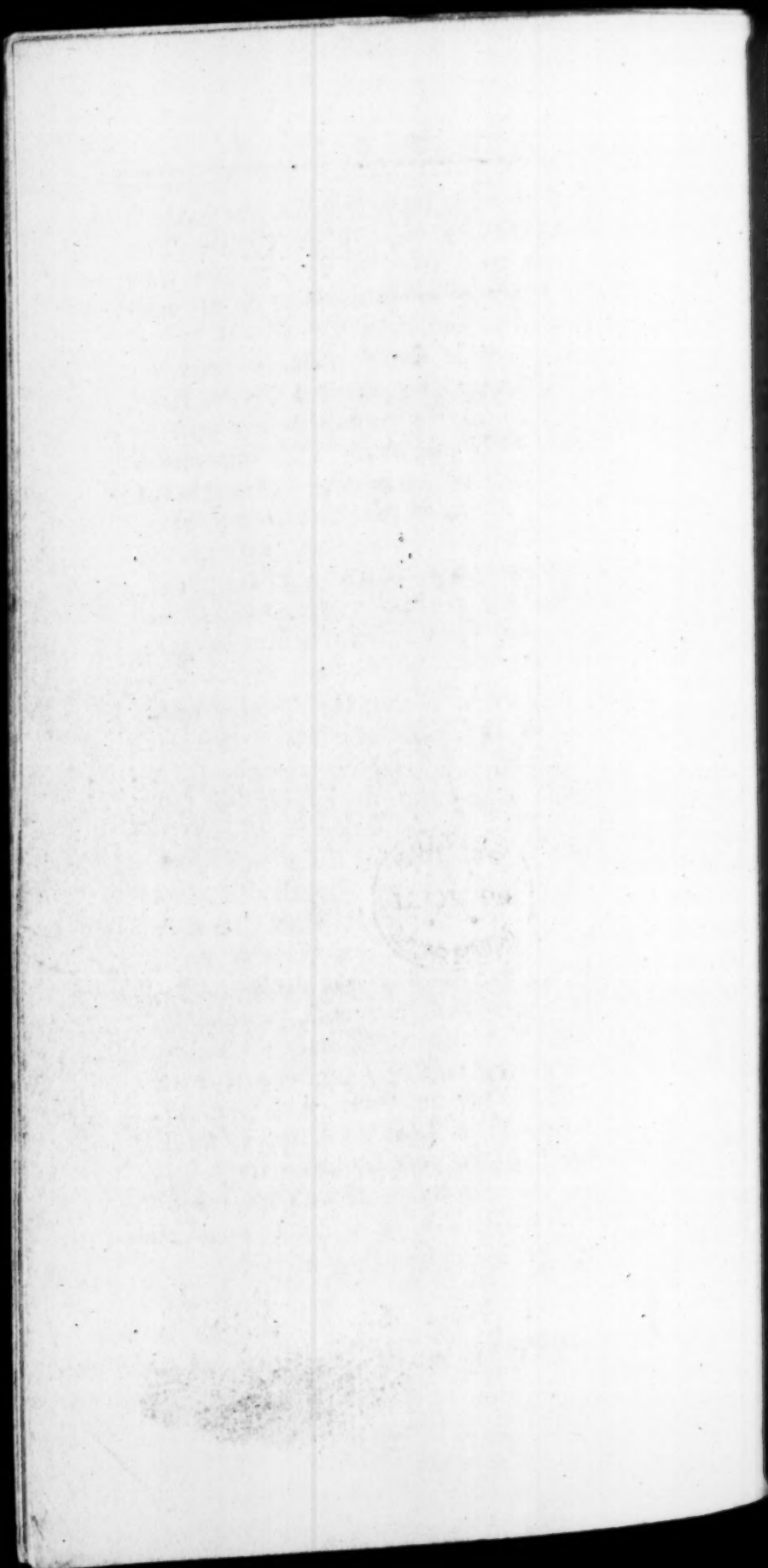
1. That *Paul* was not kept in the above-mentioned respects, by his *own power*, any more than other Saints are, nor was he kept by the power of other men, for no *man*, nor *set of men* were able to keep Paul, or any other Christian in these respects.--And therefore,

2. He wisely ascribes his being *kept* to the Lord, and him only, for says he, in the words of my text, having obtained *help of God*, *I continue to this day*; and in short, it is by the *same almighty power*, that any christian whatsoever, continues in the ways of God, and is delivered out of his troubles. Agreeable to which David says, when addressing

the Lord ; give us help from trouble, for *vain is the help of man*. Psal. lx. 11. The Apostle Peter also reminds those to whom he writes, that they are *kept by the power of God*, through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. i. 5. and indeed, such is the *number, power, and policy* of the christian's enemies, that were he not kept and guarded by the Lord himself, it would be utterly impossible for him to stand his ground. Of this truth Paul was made sensible, as is every other man who is taught of God ; and we may see from this part of our text, the real disposition of a christian, his language is, not unto me, but unto thy name be *all the praise*, now henceforth and for evermore ; for as God does all the work ; so also the christian wishes to give him all the glory thereof.

But we may observe here, that the Apostle having obtained help of the Lord, he could witness thereby, the *faithfulness* of God towards him ; for God had not only said, *I am with thee*, but told him also, that no man should set on him to hurt him ; which promise was literally fulfilled, in his being delivered out of the manifold difficulties and dangers to which he was exposed ; from the *rage and malice* of his persecutors. Thus then we find, that the Lord *helped* the Apostle out of his *difficulties and dangers* ;—*helped* him with *supplies* of grace ;—and helped him also to discharge his *duty* in his ministerial office, *willingly, faithfully, and fully* ; for says he, I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God ; (Acts xx. 27.) that is, respecting *full, and free* salvation by Jesus Christ ; happy therefore is he, that hath the God of Jacob for his *help* ; whose hope is in the Lord his God, Psal. cxlvi. 5.

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For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

Page 188.

SERMON XLIV.

Zechariah x. 8.

I will hiss for them, and gather them: for I have redeemed them.

Page 193.

SERMON XLV.

Psalms xxvii. 14.

Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.

Page 197.

SERMON XLVI.

1 Timothy iv. 10.

Therefore we labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

Page 202.

SERMON XLVII.

Luke xviii. 10.

Two men went up to the temple to pray.—

Page 206.

SERMON XLVIII.

Psalms lxi. 2.

—When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

Page 211.

B b b

I N D E X.

SERMON XLIX.

John iv. 44.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. Page 216.

SERMON L.

Psaln lxxxvii. 3.

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God. Page 220.

SERMON LI.

Acts xi. 23.

Who when he came, and had seen the grate of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, &c. Page 225.

SERMON LII.

Proverbs xii. 12.

But the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit. Page 230.

SERMON LIII.

John viii. 47.

He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God. Page 234.

SERMON LIV.

Acts xviii. 9, 10.

—Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, &c. Page 238.

SERMON LV.

Exodus iii. 2.

—Behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. Page 243.

I N D E X.

SERMON LVI.

2 Timothy ii. 10.

—Endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

Page 247.

SERMON LVII.

Numbers xxxii. 23.

Behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out.

Page 252.

SERMON LVIII.

Psaln iv. 3.

But know, that the Lord hath set apart him that is gaily for himself.—

Page 257.

SERMON LIX.

Zechariah ix. 12.

Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope; even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.

Page 261.

SERMON LX.

Song of Solomon vi. 13.

—What will ye see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies.

Page 266.

SERMON LXI.

Acts x. 34, 35.

—Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, &c.

Page 270.

SERMON LXII.

Psaln xciv. 19.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.

Page 274.

B b b. 2.

I N D E X.

SERMON LXIII.

Proverbs xiv. 32.

*The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but
the righteous hath hope in his death.* Page 279.

SERMON LXIV.

Psalms cxxxvi. 23.

*Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy
endureth for ever.* Page 284.

SERMON LXV.

Colossians ii. 12.

*Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are
risen with him, through the faith of the operation
of God.—* Page 289.

SERMON LXVI.

Psalms cxv. 17.

The dead praise not the Lord,— Page 295.

SERMON LXVII.

Isaiah xxxviii. 19.

*The living, the living shall praise thee, as I do this
day.—* Page 300.

SERMON LXVIII.

Judges xiii. 22, 23.

*And Manoah said unto his wife, we shall surely die,
because we have seen God, &c.* Page 304.

SERMON LXIX.

John vi. 37.

*All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and
him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Page 309.

I N D E X.

SERMON LXX.

2 Timothy iii. 12.

Ye, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

Page 313.

SERMON LXXI.

Galatians ii. 21.

I do not frustrate the grace of God. —

Page 317.

SERMON LXXII.

Genesis xxviii. 12.

And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth; and the top of it reached to Heaven, &c.

Page 322.

SERMON LXXIII.

Genesis xxviii. 12.

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven, &c.

Page 328.

SERMON LXXIV.

Psalms lxxxiv. 11.

For the Lord God is a sun and a shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, &c.

Page 332.

SERMON LXXV.

2 Corinthians iii. 17,

—Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Page 337.

SERMON LXXVI.

Psalms cxlv. 11.

They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.

Page 341.

I N D E X.

S E R M O N LXXVII.

Hebrews ii. 11.

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one—

Page 345.

S E R M O N LXXVIII.

Jeremiah xxxiii. 3.

Call upon me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, &c.

Page 349.

S E R M O N LXXIX.

Isaiah xliii. 21.

This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

Page 353.

S E R M O N LXXX.

Ecclesiastes ix. 14, 15, 16.

There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, &c.

Page 357.

S E R M O N LXXXI.

Ecclesiastes ix. 14, 15, 16.

There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, &c.

Page 361.

S E R M O N LXXXII.

Ecclesiastes ii. 26.

For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, knowledge and joy.

Page 365.

S E R M O N LXXXIII.

Psalms lxix. 4.

—Then I restored that which I took not away.

Page 369.

I N D E X.

S E R M O N LXXXIV.

Daniel ii. 28.

But there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets.—
Page 374.

S E R M O N LXXXV.

Pfalm xxxvii. 25.

*I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not
seen the righteous forsaken, &c.* Page 378.

S E R M O N LXXXVI.

Galatians iv. 6.

*And, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit
of his son into your hearts, &c.* Page 382.

S E R M O N LXXXVII.

Canticles vi. 2.

*My beloved is gone down into the garden, to the beds
of spices, to feed in the gardens, &c.* Page 388.

S E R M O N LXXXVIII.

1 Peter ii. 25.

*For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now re-
turned unto the shepherd, &c.* Page 393.

S E R M O N LXXXIX.

Song ii. 15.

*Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the
vines: for our vines have tender grapes.—*Page 397.

S E R M O N XC.

Deuteronomy xxxiii. 3.

*Yea, he loved the people, all his saints are in thy
hand, &c.* Page 402.

T N D E X.

SERMON XCI.

Romans viii. 2.

For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Page 406.

SERMON XCII.

Isaiah xlv. 20.

He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, &c.

Page 411.

SERMON XCIII.

Song v. 16.

—This is my friend,—

Page 415.

SERMON XCIV.

Matthew xxiii. 37.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered THY CHILDREN together, &c.

Page 420.

SERMON XCV.

Ezekiel xiii. 22.

Because with lies, ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hand of the wicked, &c.

Page 424.

SERMON XCVI.

Genesis xlix. 10.

—And unto him, shall the gathering of the people be.

Page 428.

SERMON XCVII.

2 Timothy iii. 5.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away,

Page 432.

I N D E X.

S E R M O N XCVIII.

I Peter. i. 5.

*Who are kept by the power of God, through faith
unto salvation.* Page 436.

S E R M O N XCIX.

Isaiah xli. 10.

*Fear thou not ; for I am with thee : be not dismayed ;
for I am thy God, &c.* Page 440.

S E R M O N C.

Song ii. 3.

*I sat down under his shadow with great delight ; and
his fruit was sweet to my taste.* Page 444.

S E R M O N CI.

Acts xxvii. 44.

*And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces
of the ship : and so it came to pass, that they escaped
all safe to land.* Page 448.

S E R M O N CII.

Matthew xii. 35.

*A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart,
bringeth forth good things, &c.* Page 453.

S E R M O N CIII.

Luke xv. 2.

—This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. Page 457.

S E R M O N CIV.

Luke xxii. 31, 32.

*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath
desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat :
but I have prayed for thee, &c.* Page 461.

I N D E X.

SERMON CV.

Titus ii. 14.

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Page 465.

SERMON CVI.

1 Timothy ii. 6.

Who gave himself a ransom for all. Page 470.

SERMON CVII.

John ix. 16.

—This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Page 475.

SERMON CVIII.

Ezekiel iii. 17.

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.—Page 479.

SERMON CIX.

Exodus xx. 24.

—In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. Page 484.

SERMON CX.

Jude 21.

Keep yourselves in the love of God.— Page 487.

SERMON CXI.

Romans iii. 24.

Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Page 491.

I N D E X.

S E R M O N CXII.

Pſalm cxviii. 22, 23.

The ſtone, which the builders reſuſed, is become the head of the corner, &c. Page 512.

S E R M O N CXIII.

1 Timothy i. 8.

But we know that the law is good; if a man uſe it lawfully. Page 516.

S E R M O N CXIV.

Luke xiii. 7, 8, 9.

—Cut it down: why cumbereth it the ground? and he anſwering, ſaid unto him, Lord, let it alone this year alſo, &c. Page 522.

S E R M O N CXV.

Acts ii. 23.

Him, being delivered by the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and ſlain. Page 527.

S E R M O N CXVI.

Eccleſiaſtes v. 4, 5.

When thou voweſt a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleaſure in fools, &c. Page 531.

S E R M O N CXVII.

Job xiv. 14.

—All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Page 538.

S E R M O N CXVIII.

1 John ii. 2.

And he is the propitiation for our ſins; and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.

Page 543.

I N D E X.

SERMON CXIX.

Revelations xiv. 13.

—*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord—*

Page 549.

SERMON CXX.

Acts xxvi. 22.

*Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue
unto this day.*

Page 553.

E R R A T A.

- Page 44, line 27. For *on earth*, read *and on earth*.
Page 49, line 3. For *they will*, read *will they*.
Page 75, line 3. For *after we*, read *after that we*.
Page 159, line 17. For *my body under*, read *under my body*.
Page 173, line 29. For *thy table*, read *thine own table*.
Page 210, line 11. After it, read *and*.
Page 212, line 33. For *warning against*, read *warning against*.
Page 232, line 15. For *two seals*, read *seven seals*.
Page 253, line 24. For *the root of righteousness*, read *the root
the righteous*.
Page 252, line 18. For *sin*, read *sin*.
Page 261, line 13. For *turn ye* read *turn you*.
Page 448, line 23. For *escaped safe* read *escaped all safe*.
Page 512, line 2. For *Psalms cxxviii*. read *Psalms cxviii*.